BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Madeline H. Fujihara Leslie

Madeline Leslie was born in 1919 in Keālia, South Kona, Hawaiʻi. Her father, Kohei Fujihara, was an immigrant from Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan. Her mother, Lily Haʻae Fujihara, was a native Hawaiian from Keālia. Madeline was the second of seven children, and the eldest daughter.

Leslie grew up working in K. Fujihara Store in Keālia, a convenience store run by her parents. She quit school after seventh grade at Konawaena School to help her parents with the day-to-day operation of the business.

In 1940, she married Robert Leslie, Jr. The couple raised their family in Keʻei and Nāpōʻopoʻo. Between 1951 and 1966, she ran Leslie's Fish Market, which was located in the Matsumura building where Chris's Bakery is today. She sold fish, caught by her fisherman husband and his crew, to places such as Ocean View Inn in Kailua and Manago Hotel in Captain Cook.

Kohei Fujihara passed his store business on to Leslie in 1957. He died in 1963. In 1966, she purchased land in Keālia and built a new Fujihara Store, located across the street from her parents' original store. In 1989, at age 70, she leased the store to new owners, who kept the original name.

Leslie and her husband raised five children.

Tape No. 35-1-1-00

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Madeline Fujihara Leslie (ML)

Keālia, Kona, Hawai'i

April 3, 2000

BY: Maile Melrose (MM) and Nancy Piianaia (NP)

MM: Today is Monday, April 3, 2000. We're here in Keālia with Madeline Fujihara Leslie and with Nancy Piianaia and Maile Melrose. And we're going to do an oral history about old Kona stores.

So first of all Madeline, could you tell us when and where you were born?

ML: Let's see, I was born in March 12, 1919 in Keālia.

MM: And you were born at home?

ML: Home delivery.

MM: Home delivery. And you said you are the—which child in your family?

ML: I'm the second. The first daughter.

MM: The first daughter. And your mother had how many children?

ML: Well, she had seven and one stillborn makes eight.

MM: Oh, makes eight children.

ML: Yeah, but the last one stillborn.

NP: What were the names of your parents?

ML: My dad is Kohei Fujihara. And my mom is Lily Ha'ae.

MM: And your mother was from right here in Keālia, right?

ML: Yeah, right.

MM: Her parents. And Madeline, what are your earliest memories of growing up in Keālia?

ML: When I was seven years old, right after I [started] school, I remember those days. Like walking to school and the road was a little rough, it wasn't paved. And getting there five minutes to eight o'clock, because there were chores to do at home before I could leave the house.

NP: What kind of chores?

ML: Well, there's always another baby below. So like soaking the baby diapers. And rinse those and just leave it in the bucket and when my mom is ready, she'll do the washing.

MM: So you were walking to Hoʻokena School?

ML: Hoʻokena School, barefooted.

NP: Oh wow. You must have had tough feet.

ML: Oh, we all did from here. That's the way we grow up. And wearing clothes that you use twice a week. We changed twice a week, yeah.

MM: Because, yeah, your mother cannot do laundry every day, right?

ML: Yeah. Seven children, and then she did outside work like when during the coffee season, and she helped with the store. And sometimes doing farm work.

MM: Madeline, where was your house compared to the modern Fujihara Store?

ML: Well, let's see. It's across the street, the old building.

MM: *Makai* side of the road?

ML: Right, in fact it's next to—in between the church is. . . . See the church there?

MM: Pukaʻana Church?

ML: Pukaʻana Church.

MM: Yes.

ML: And there's an empty lot there?

MM: Yes.

ML: And our house . . .

MM: Is the next one?

ML: Yeah.

MM: And it has the cement steps?

ML: Right. But I don't know what business my dad had first. I remember the barbershop and then he had a pool table. Then slowly he extended and he start building up. Finally he added some groceries, like that.

MM: Was it a separate building from your house?

ML: No, he joined them. They lived all in one—the house, the back was the bedrooms, the kitchen, and bedroom again. Because the family got big, he added little more rooms. But we had—you know those Japanese bathhouse.

NP: *O-furo*.

ML: *O-furo*, yeah. It's connected to the house so you go right through, you don't have to go outside but you have to pass through one of the bedrooms.

MM: Oh, unusual that the *furo* was [added] to the house, right?

ML: Yeah.

NP: You had how many bedrooms?

ML: Three. One is a small room but then after that, my dad added and he made it where we can go into that room to take a bath instead of going out. But at [one time], we had to go outside to get into that *furo* house.

NP: Yeah, and did you sleep Japanese style? Did you have mats on the floor?

ML: No, that's funny. When I grew up, we had beds in the house. Maybe we had in another room but I don't remember that.

MM: But your mother was Hawaiian, she would be used to having a bed, I think.

ML: Yeah, that's right. We had beds to sleep.

MM: You said your father, you think, started the store before you were born.

ML: Yes, he did.

MM: Probably like 1915?

ML: Let's see.

MM: Once, I think you said, 1915 or 1916.

ML: [Nineteen] sixteen. 'Cause he got married to my mom, 1914. Yeah, about that. But then I had a brother above me that was born. . . .

MM: Maybe [1916], was your brother born? You were born 1919.

ML: Right. But he was two-and-a-half years older than I.

MM: And the store was already started, though?

ML: Mm-hmm [yes].

MM: That's a pretty old store.

ML: Old, old. Too bad I didn't have the pictures. You could see all the patches of the floor—each time he added. And sometimes he would get some new materials in between. But then after they paint, you wouldn't . . .

NP: You couldn't tell.

ML: Yeah.

MM: Did he have to build the structure or was it already there for the store?

ML: Well, when I was born, the building was there but after that he added more and more. I remember all that.

MM: And did you do a job in the store when you were little?

ML: Well, no. More to take the little ones, take care and some minor things to do.

MM: Who ran the store, your father or your mother?

ML: They both did.

NP: Was it open every day, Madeline?

ML: Every day, yeah. But it was a small store, not a big store. But slowly, gradually he added more room and he got more things to sell. Like fish equipment because people go fishing down the beach. And a lot of food, like sardines and codfish.

MM: The salted codfish.

NP: The dry, salted one.

ML: Yeah, the dried ones because he had Hawaiians also and the Japanese eat them, too. And vegetables, no, but he would sell round onion and potatoes.

MM: Oh, where did he get that from?

ML: Well, he buys from Amfac, down Nāpoʻopoʻo, they had a big Amfac wholesale [store], so that's where he did all of the shopping. And gradually salesmen from Hilo and Honolulu would come and stop and he would buy a little bit because it has to come by steamer, right?

MM: Mm-hmm. So did he go to Nāpoʻopoʻo maybe once a week to collect [groceries] or. . . .

ML: Oh, he buys canned goods, too. Some canned goods.

MM: From American Factors?

ML: From American Factors because that was a big store there.

NP: What kind of canned goods were popular?

ML: Corned beef, especially. Corned beef, tomato sardine. That's our daily. (Chuckles) We sell quite a bit of that.

MM: Tomato sardines?

ML: Yeah, people depend on that and corned beef and canned salmon, which was cheap at that time. You know, canned---not like today.

ML: More of canned goods where the Hawaiians would come and buy. And few Japanese items because he had Japanese people here, also.

NP: And the Japanese items would be. . . .

ML: Like, you know what is *iriko?*

NP: Mm-hmm [yes]. The little tiny fish.

ML: Yeah, the Hawaiians eat them, too.

MM: They're good.

ML: But he had some pickled things made in Japan.

NP: *Tsukemono*, kind?

ML: No, like the eating—canned, you know those? I cannot remember the name.

MM: All the way from Japan, this came?

ML: Well, because a salesman from Honolulu would come once a month and stop by and so he would buy from them. Then slowly, Hilo start to build up. They had Y. Hata [& Co.], Hawai'i [Retail] Grocers [Association], American Trading [Co.]. Then he start buying from them.

NP: Did he sell miso and shoyu?

ML: Yeah, right.

MM: Did anybody make tofu down here?

ML: We had a couple, old people from Japan that lived past the Ho'okena School. Every Saturday or Sundays is tofu day and you can get a block for five cents. They make very good tofu.

MM: And how did you---did you go pick up the tofu?

ML: No, they delivered. Sometimes people go and pick it up. It's just about not even a mile.

NP: Would they keep it in a big container . . .

ML: With water.

NP: . . . with water.

ML: And when they sell them, they take it out from the [can]. They scoop it out.

NP: I'll bet it was good, fresh.

ML: Oh, it was so good. This old couple. You know, they had a son that had a store down Kailua. Yamasaki.

NP: So their name was Yamasaki? The tofu makers?

ML: Yeah, Yamasaki. Then they had a son, got married to somebody that had a shop there and then his son-in-law took over. Fishing supplies, like that. He was born and raised here across the courthouse and the jail. You know we had a jail here?

MM: No, no. You had a jail, too?

ML: A jail house, yeah. Right down, you pass Ho'okena School, it's a big yard and they had the courthouse, very big courthouse. And the jail house---my grandfather was a jail keeper.

MM: Oh, is that your mother's father?

ML: Yeah.

MM: So that's Phillip, Phillip Ha'ae?

ML: Phillip, right, right.

MM: He was the jail keeper.

ML: Right. He would come down and buy for those prisoners, crackers, sardines, corned beef, salmon. That's the kind of things they eat.

MM: They were lucky prisoners.

ML: Yeah, rice and *poi. Poi,* they have their own.

NP: Oh, they had their own *poi?*

ML: Yeah, sometimes—like my grandfather, they pound their own taro to make *poi.* Nobody---there's no place to buy *poi* until later. Then the Higashis. But every Hawaiian family grow their own taros and they pound their own.

MM: Did your mother do that?

ML: Yeah, right in my dad's kitchen. My cousin came down, my grandfather was great in pounding. With the (*poi* pounder).

MM: You had the *poi* pounder?

ML: Yeah, the *poi* pounder.

MM: And in the wooden board?

ML: Right, right. Too bad I gave away the board and the stone. My sister got it but I don't know what happened, she passed away. And someone came to ask me for that *poi* board. It's a big *poi* board.

MM: It's like three feet long, it looks like.

ML: Yeah, I think so. And it's a big one. See, when they pound then they push the *poi* [to the end of the board], put over here. Then [they start pounding] the next [taro corm], yeah.

MM: Did you ever learn to pound the *poi?*

ML: I saw them doing that right in the kitchen. And everybody pounds *poi.*

NP: That's an art that is almost gone, isn't it?

ML: Yeah. Nobody does that now. They have machine to grind the *poi.*

NP: Was the *poi* different? The pounded *poi*, was the texture different and did it taste different?

ML: Well, they were very good in spite of—you know the machine, you can grind 'em smooth but the rock, the *poi* pounder, was just as good.

MM: And is that---Kona is famous for different kinds of dryland taro, right?

ML: Oh yes.

MM: Because down here, do you have the very purple kind of taro? Or what color?

ML: Something like that. And they have that lighter color but the purple, I think, the best.

NP: The best, yeah. Everyone likes that one.

ML: To me, yeah. And they can---they save all the leaves and the stalks. They use that to cook. I know my dad used to cook that.

MM: He learned to like Hawaiian food?

ML: Yeah, because my mother is Hawaiian. Oh, and they make *laulau*. You know the leaf of the taro?

MM: Yeah.

ML: The certain---the young shoot that still folds.

NP: That's right.

ML: Or half open. They bring that and wash it clean and use that to put—wrap in a *ti* leaf with pork and . . .

NP: And make the *laulau*.

ML: *Laulau*, right. That's the way they did.

NP: Would your mom make *laulau*s? Did she have time to do that?

ML: No. She did baking, you know, bake pie and doughnuts and. . . .

NP: What kind of a stove did she have?

ML: A two-burner kerosene stove. Oh no, they had big stove where that heavy type, that old, yeah.

NP: Old-style.

ML: Old-style was, she made.

MM: But not wood-burning, Madeline? Was it wood-burning?

ML: No, kerosene, big stove.

NP: And she must have had an oven if she could do the pies.

ML: Yeah, she did. We were young kids but she had the old-style oven you can just put it on the stove. In fact, I had that, too, until I got rid after I moved into a little modern house.

MM: (Laughs) And your mother made doughnuts?

ML: Yeah, and she's good in baking, very good. All her sisters are great in baking, especially the cakes.

NP: So did you grow up with a lot of cousins, here in Keālia?

ML: Mm-hmm [yes]. They lived not too far. And we get together when there's a family reunion like birthdays, and weddings like that.

MM: Okay, so you grew up, you're walking to Hoʻokena School every day, you helped your mother with the baby diapers in the morning before everything.

ML: Before, yeah.

MM: And then you came home in the afternoon.

ML: Right, we all came. Then I stopped and went to Japanese[-language] school for an hour.

MM: Where was the Japanese[-language] school?

ML: Well, when you get to Ho'okena, the big building on the left. The big green building, I don't know if it's there anymore.

MM: I don't know either.

ML: Yeah, that was a Japanese[-language] school and they had a little cottage for the teachers. And in the back they had a big (combined kitchen and hall where they'd meet on special occasions).

MM: So your father wanted you to go to Japanese[-language] school.

ML: Well, he wanted us to learn. So I went four years, I think. I learned a little bit but then the Japanese children I went to school with speak English. Only when they get home, then they use their Japanese. But I learned a little and then they taught me how to sew kimono.

MM: But in your own home, what language did you speak?

ML: Well, my mother being Hawaiian, and my father, he speaks those broken language, you know. Broken English. And she understand. They both understand one another.

MM: They're kind of talking in English to each other.

ML: Yeah. That's why I often wondered, how did my father correspond with her when he was from Japan? But then I found out he lived here long enough with all the others and they speak little mix of Hawaiian, little Japanese. Just simple words.

MM: How did your parents meet? Do you know?

ML: Her sister told me once that while she was attending Ho'okena School and the sisters would get home after school and sometimes she didn't get home. But it was funny, when I heard this story. Then my grandpa would send one of the daughters to come down and look for her. She's in my dad's house, visiting.

MM: Oh, so he did have that store and he was living there.

ML: That time, it wasn't a store. (It was first a barbershop.)

MM: But he was already here in Keālia.

ML: Yeah, after working years in the plantation.

MM: Because he came from Japan.

ML: From Japan, yeah. Many of them came.

MM: He came, you said, to work on Maui, you think? First?

ML: Well, they worked here and in Maui.

NP: What part of Japan did your father come from?

ML: Yamaguchi.

MM: So he came here and then your mother was quite young when she married him.

ML: Sixteen years old. And he was thirteen years older.

MM: Oh, he was a lucky man.

(Laughter)

ML: But besides him, there were few other Japanese who married Hawaiians here. You remember in Ke'ei, after you pass Ege store? He used to work at the hospital, heavy set. Pua, his name, Jacob Pua. His wife is half Japanese also.

MM: Oh. So down here in Keālia, this is not so unusual, the Japanese, Hawaiian. . . .

ML: Wherever Japanese came and landed they stayed here to work. There were no Japanese girls so they met up with the Hawaiians. And I know Mr. Aoki said he almost married a lady down here, the Nahinus. But somehow, some of them had picture bride, right? When they come over and they get married. But my father was married before he came. Either when he came or when he went back or. . . . I was told he came here and they went back again. At that time, they said there was German-Japan war or something? [ML is probably referring to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904.] Because I wasn't born then, yet. And one time, I saw he had this heavy army jacket and all these things that if you go become in the military. He had that.

MM: So maybe after the war then he—but your brother is born in 1916. He had to be back here in Hawai'i.

ML: Right, so he must have came when he was a young man. Maybe seventeen or eighteen years old. He came by ship. I know in that question they ask him, he did not remember the name of the ship when they came. But then again I was told that after he came, he went back home . . .

MM: To Japan.

ML: To Japan. Maybe that's when he got married.

NP: The first time.

ML: The first time. And then he came back here and the wife and the little child was supposed to have joined him and he didn't have any money to . . .

MM: To bring them to Hawai'i.

ML: To bring them here, yeah. And I found out from Mrs. Kimura, she said, "Don't be ashamed because your dad is not the only one that came with a wife behind. There are some others who did the same thing. Some got married two times, three times." See? But my father didn't tell my mom he was married. I think.

(Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

ML: And that's how he got this baby girl. He couldn't remember what she---because he was old when they interviewed him, quite old. So. . . .

NP: So his wife and daughter were never able to join him here?

ML: No, and it took quite long until I saw—he had some letters came. And there were some pictures. I saw a wedding picture and a couple with a baby. So that means he was married before.

NP: And he actually had seen the baby and maybe had lived there before he came back.

ML: Either that, or when he came out the baby was born.

MM: Right after he left?

ML: Yeah. Could be because when I went to Japan and met my half sister's children, they couldn't speak English and I couldn't ask them because I had forgot about Japanese words. And they used big words, I use those common ones. But their daughter that comes here every year to visit, she gave me a little (of the history). And then they sent my mom—I mean, my half sister's picture. But my dad had these pictures each time the letter come, there's something new. The young couple with a baby, that was his granddaughter.

MM: But your mother died so young.

ML: Very young.

MM: She was thirty-two?

ML: Thirty-two.

MM: Thirty-two years old. So she never knew this?

ML: No, no.

MM: She never did.

ML: She never did. And until I went to take up a little sewing from my friend, her mother asked me if I knew that my father was married and had a little daughter there.

I said, "No, I don't."

NP: That must have been a shock for you.

NP: Yeah, I didn't know. He didn't say anything. But after he found out then he came out in the open, especially when he went to take up—you know, when he tries to become a citizen? And he was the only one that was not passed.

NP: Because he didn't divorce her first.

ML: Yeah, yeah. But [you know] Mrs. Kimura [of H. Kimura] Store?

MM: Yes, Irene.

ML: Irene's dad and my dad came from the same place. So she always think we're related, but I don't know. So when I go there, and I mention about my father, she was the one said don't be ashamed because there were others that did the same thing.

MM: Oh yeah, don't. Don't be ashamed. We cannot be responsible for our fathers.

ML: Right, right. Then she told me her dad was the same, too.

(Laughter)

ML: She said he married second time and the other one married third time. I mean the ones that came out to Hawai'i before. But Mrs. Kimura's parents were very close with my dad and would come here all the time, go down the beach house, spend the weekend there. And my father would drive up to see Irene's parents. And he would take me along with them. And just sit down, talk story.

MM: And Irene's parents lived where, in Kona?

ML: You know where the Noguchi Mill is? The old mill?

MM: It's on the *mauka* side of the road?

ML: Right.

MM: The big, dark coffee mill building?

ML: Yeah, it's right below that. They lived further this side and you drive all the way up. You know, all the old Japanese had coffee land and so that's where I went. My dad would take me to play there. And Irene's dad and my dad were very close. Always get together, with the Nakamuras.

MM: Oh, with the Nakamuras, too?

ML: Yeah, the Nakamuras. Now the Nakamuras, they had a son, worked at the mill. And his wife worked at Konawaena School cafeteria. She retired. Yeah, he passed away.

MM: Now Madeline, what's interesting is, your father must have been a Buddhist.

ML: Mm-hmm [yes].

MM: And then your mother, she was a Roman Catholic.

ML: Catholic, right.

MM: So all your children were all raised Roman Catholic?

ML: Except two boys.

MM: Except two boys?

ML: Yeah. My third and fourth brother was not baptized. I went to check with the Catholic church. I think maybe my mother left them to join with my father's church.

NP: Mm, because they were the boys.

ML: Yeah.

NP: Sons.

ML: But the first son is Catholic.

MM: So I was wondering, after Japanese[-language] school, did you come home after that?

ML: Yeah, come home.

MM: And you'd help your mother then? Your father?

ML: Yeah, well she would do the cooking every day. But after she passed away, yeah, my dad did.

MM: So a big change happened in your life when your mother died.

ML: Mm-hmm, yeah.

NP: And how old were you then?

ML: I was eleven years old. See, I was born 1919, she died [January 13], 1930. She died while I was still at Hoʻokena School. And then I went to Konawaena ʼcause I was too young to quit.

MM: That's when you said you had to take a bus to Konawaena, seventh grade.

ML: No (charge for the bus ride), seventh grade was free. When you got to the higher grade, then you pay. Which was cheap, six dollars a month.

MM: Six dollars a month from Keālia to [Konawaena School]. . . .

ML: Yeah, yeah.

NP: But that was too much for your family, though.

ML: Oh yeah. And . . .

NP: So eighth grade you stopped going to school.

ML: No, no, I did not. Seventh grade. Then it was *pau*.

ML: Then I didn't continue on.

NP: And so you finished seventh grade and your mother had died then?

ML: She died before I quit school.

MM: Before you quit school. And then it was time to come back and help your father raise the kids.

ML: Mm-hmm [yes]. Because I had a sister was about two years old and my dad had hard time taking care of her. So my mom's sister would come and pick her up and keep ʼem. But my dad said, "No, you can only keep ʼem two or three days." He wanted them home. My dad wanted my sister home. And he got upset if she stays too long. That's one thing I give my father credit: no mother, but he wants all the children home.

NP: What did your mom die of so young?

ML: After the last baby was born, it was stillborn. And she said she got sick, she never got well again until she died. She had the baby October 3, from that time on, she went to Kona Hospital. Then it was getting bad, they sent her home. When they sent her home, My dad folks took her down to Keālia Beach because it was warm for her. And so we all moved there to stay except the ones going to school. My father stayed to take care the store and take care the ones who go to Hoʻokena School. And. . . .

NP: And you went down there to take care of her, (along with my aunt).

ML: Yeah, and I had another sister below me. So we took turns. Well, you know those days, we didn't have any doctor. Maybe we had one, if you remember that name? I forgot. Dr. Jeffrey?

MM: Oh, Dr. Jeffrey.

ML: Is that the one?

MM: Yes, yes.

ML: Yeah, but everything the Hawaiians here, they took care their own. Yeah.

NP: So did they---did Hawaiians come and try to use Hawaiian medicine and remedies to try to heal her?

ML: My grandfather, her father. Phillip Haʻae.

MM: Phillip Haʻae. The jail keeper?

ML: Right.

NP: He must have been so sad to see the daughter getting so sick. So then your mother got buried, you said, in the cemetery?

ML: Yeah, at Kalahiki. You know, those days you cannot keep the body. And when she died, we had an old carpenter here, Mr. Fukushima, and they would go up buy those redwood materials.

MM: The boards.

ML: The boards, yeah. The bottom, the whole thing, you know? In no time, they got it together.

NP: The coffin?

ML: The coffin. And then they had the black rag around.

MM: They do. They wrap the whole coffin, don't they?

ML: All with black material. And they do it in no time. They were experts.

MM: And they say sometimes they put Hawaiian salt inside with the body.

ML: To keep 'em.

MM: To keep it a little longer?

ML: Yes. But my mom, no. They just---that same day.

NP: That same day.

ML: Yeah, that same afternoon. So when her sister was on her way coming to the funeral, she was already buried.

NP: Did you all go? Did the children go, too?

ML: Yeah, but we were so young yet. But before she passed away, I think she asked to have either my sister or I on the weekend, we ride the bus and go up to the hospital and spend the night with her. Two nights, my sister and I took turns. Weekends, yeah.

NP: To keep her company and help her out.

(Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

ML: And all the children on the side waiting, five cents a Milk Nickel stick.

MM: The Dairymen's truck would come down here?

ML: Yeah, it would stop and all those kids—because it's—every Monday is ice cream truck. Then he would stop the next place.

MM: Oh, and Madeline, you have to tell the story. You said your mother used to make ice cream.

ML: Oh, that's right.

NP: Where did she ever find the time?

ML: I still can picture the barrel. It's a nice barrel, round. And in between there's a cone. The cone is inside and there's space to put all the ice in. And then she would make the mixture and . . .

NP: And then she'd crank it.

ML: Crank it, yeah. And it gets hard. And that was only Sunday, ice cream day. She don't do it every Sunday but lot of times, she does that. And people look forward to come and buy five cents, one . . .

NP: She would make enough to sell?

ML: Yeah. It's what she did, she sold by the cone.

MM: Little ice cream cone, right?

ML: Yeah, five cents a cone.

NP: And what flavors do you remember?

ML: She made vanilla. I wonder if she had strawberry. I know she had another flavor. I can't remember but vanilla was popular then.

MM: And you said your father used to make shave ice.

ML: Yeah. You ever seen the shave ice [machine] with—it's about this high and then four corner metal legs? And then you put a block in and then you grind and all that ice would fill up a big pan and you scoop 'em in a paper—you know that cup?

MM: The little cone?

ML: No, the paper. The shave ice cup was big. It's pointed and then comes wide. And they scoop and fill up a big cup. And then for five cents.

NP: Would he do that all the time? Was that one of the things he had in the store?

ML: Mm-hmm, but no electricity. See, we didn't have electricity so it was hand grind.

NP: And they would deliver the ice. He must have---did he have ice blocks?

ML: No, he buys.

NP: He would buy.

ML: Yeah, because we had no ice maker. I don't know where he'd buy, somebody would sell him ice and so. . . . So when they had picnic days too at Ho'okena Beach, somebody would bring that machine. And it goes to the next house, they all borrow. Borrow to take 'em to the beach. It was so nice to go picnic those days, you know? And we played games in the bag or. . . .

MM: Oh, the sack race?

ML: Yes, sack race.

MM: This is---what is picnic day, Madeline? Is it picnic day at Ho'okena Beach?

ML: Yeah, well, like in school, they had for certain occasions. Everybody goes down and—food that they share with everybody. And spend the whole day. Had games.

MM: So you'd do sack race and . . .

ML: No, the boys did that.

MM: The boys did sack race?

ML: Yeah. And there's something else that you run back and forth, I forgot what it was.

NP: Like a relay race, you mean.

ML: I think so, yeah. I mean, there were all kinds of things. And then they ended up with Japanese wrestling. The boys . . .

NP: Sumo.

ML: Sumo. Even at the school up here, we had a place special for the boys that go to Japanese[-language] school. They had wrestling all the time. But it was some occasion time. Not the adults now, these are the boys. But maybe sometimes they have adults. But it's more for the boys that go to school and the ones that's out of school that live in the area.

MM: Like boy's day, did they fly a lot of carp down here? Did the families put up the poles?

ML: They had something, all like that. Everyone that has a boy. And they have gathering for that, too at the Japanese[-language] (school hall). They had a big kitchen there.

MM: At the Buddhist church?

ML: Yeah, and then all the wives are there to help make the rice, cook something else. All with wood. Use wood to make fire to cook. And it's lots to eat, but inexpensive way. It's the Japanese way, everybody chip in.

MM: So there were quite a few Japanese down here.

ML: Yeah, we had lot of Japanese people and very few Hawaiians, but the beach had lots.

MM: The Hawaiians all lived at the beach because they were—were they the fishermen?

ML: Yeah, I guess so.

MM: Did you sell fish at all in those days at the store?

ML: No, only when I had that market there but not . . .

MM: Not at Fujihara Store?

ML: We used to buy and eat but not to sell.

MM: You said your father used to raise stuff for you guys to eat?

ML: Yeah, chicken and rabbits and pigs.

MM: Kind of unusual, the rabbits.

ML: But he loved to see rabbit and we eat lot of rabbits, that's why I got tired [of eating rabbits].

NP: How would they cook the rabbits?

ML: Well, he would make curry powders, stew, make *hekka* like he did with chicken. They're good-eating because they're young yet. And he would save all the skin. And in the bedroom, we had linoleum floor, he would put here and there so when we sit it's warm.

MM: Did you ever sew them together?

ML: No, he just dry 'em up and they look so neat.

MM: Rabbit skins. What color?

ML: White. But they matured enough that you can get the skins.

MM: Yeah, but what did they eat?

ML: Well, they feed 'em with some greens like ti leaf, whatever kind of greens. That's what the rabbit eats. It's easy to pick up food for them. My father would just go behind and pick it up.

NP: Pick it up.

ML: But we feed the chickens and the pigs.

NP: Yeah. Did you have a garden also? Did you grow vegetables?

ML: My father did. They were in the back, like eggplant, carrots, cabbage, cucumbers, and string beans. We had all those. And he had those Japanese taro where he could cut the stem and cook it with the meat.

NP: It's amazing how hard people worked, isn't it? And how much they were able to do in one day.

ML: That's right. There was always work, work. That's the Japanese immigrants that came here. I watched them and I—just like my dad. You remember every year they pound *mochi?*

NP: Yes, did you used to do that, too?

ML: Well, the other neighbors come and they get together. The next year, the next neighbor and they all share.

NP: So what was New Year's like then? Was that a big celebration for you?

ML: Well, for the Japanese people, the New Year's, they'd go to church and they go visit—you know those days? All the men of the house get [together].

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MM: I just wondered if you remember that when you were a child, there was a Chinese store here in Keālia.

ML: Mm-hmm, right down there. There were two, right? [Y. K.] Aiona Store.

MM: That's right.

ML: And Sing Sang. That's all I know his name. It's a small building, Chinese. Lot of people of my age would remember that.

MM: The Sing Sang Store. And you said that was a single Chinese man?

ML: He was single and then next to him was a Chinese couple. The one I told you had children. They had two daughters and three sons.

MM: That was a big Chinese family next door.

ML: Yeah, right next to that store. And they lived there until the mister passed away and then the daughter took the mom to Hilo.

MM: That's the Chinese family.

ML: Yeah, but they didn't have the store, but just a family.

MM: Next to the Sing Sang Store.

ML: Right, right.

MM: And what happened to Mr. Sing Sang?

MM: He passed away.

MM: Here in Keālia?

ML: Yeah, but I think they took him to the Chinese cemetery.

MM: Oh, where---the one by . . .

ML: Keauhou. I don't remember seeing him with a family, no wife, no children.

MM: And Aiona Store was right across the street from your [dad's] store.

ML: Yeah, my dad's one was angle way, but the steps are still there.

MM: The steps on the *makai* side of the road?

ML: Yeah.

MM: So was Aiona Store there before your father?

ML: No, he was---they were here this area.

NP: Did they sell different things in the Chinese stores? Or. . . .

ML: Yes, some things. But more is for daily people like the Hawaiians. See, when you live this area, you know what they buy because you depending on them. Others don't come, hardly, because all the stores have about the same thing.

NP: So even, whether it was Chinese or Japanese, you had the same kind of merchandise?

ML: Right. And if there's something that they want special, then they can find a way to get it. So. . . .

MM: But interesting, two stores so close to each other. But you had different customers.

ML: Right. Or sometimes the same customers. In those days, everybody comes and they charge enough. When they get their pay, they come and pay you. Or they would exchange, like my dad takes in lot of *lau hala* weaving. So they bring that. And then they exchange with groceries.

MM: Did they do it with coffee down here, too? Did they exchange coffee for. . . .

ML: No, I think they would sell to their own market, the coffee. But my father would buy the cherry coffee and he had a big machine in the back with the water pump.

MM: Oh, the pulper.

ML: Yeah and then the dryer. The big dryer.

MM: The *hoshidana?*

ML: *Hoshidana.* But my mother was still living when they had that. So that's how we learned how to push that little rake, turn over the coffee, let 'em dry. Even when we grew up, it was like that.

MM: That was your job? You helped out?

ML: My brothers did that. I seldom helped because I had three brothers. (MM chuckles.) So they do that. Then we helped maybe when we hold the bag and they put the parchment inside and they press it down with the broomstick handle to get more in. Because the parchment is light. They're big and bulky, but they're not heavy like the cherry.

MM: That's right and you're trying to get the parchment to weigh 100 pounds inside the bag.

ML: Well, whatever bag size, take 'em down to American Factors. We exchanged with groceries to sell.

NP: And he would get the coffee from the people that came to the store.

ML: Yeah, he buys their cherry coffee. Not all. Sometimes they would sell to another store.

NP: So he would buy it, he wouldn't exchange it for groceries for them? Or would he do both?

ML: Well, some I guess, with groceries. He didn't have a big store but he had the needy things, the needy items that people would live on.

MM: But he sold, like, the hundred-pound bags of rice. Did he have big bags of rice in his store?

ML: Yeah, and then we packed them in five- and ten-pound packages. It never came like that, like they do today. It was a big bag and then you fill up five pound, they want twenty pound. It's more five and ten pounds.

NP: Did you have paper then? Or did you use cloth?

ML: Package.

NP: Package.

ML: Yeah, paper bags.

MM: Like a brown paper bag?

ML: Yeah and every (empty) hundred-pound bag, my dad would bleach them out. And I learned to do that. And after it's all dried up, all the words are gone, then he'd wash that with a little Clorox and I have to press them. They're pretty big. He made me sew four hundred-pound (empty) bags for bedsheets. And I did that even after I got married. I put all those big four. . . . See, they have the outside bag with all the words, the big words, "extra fancy" or whatever. When that's empty, he saved it, we have enough, and he would soak them. You know, you rub the soap on it and he had it soak with a little Clorox. And he'd take 'em in the yard and he'd dry them out, and the sun hits.

MM: Just bleaches it out.

ML: Yeah, uh-huh. And that is all clean, wash clean. And he tells me, "Sew four of that." And we have a big bed sheet. Just sew across that way.

NP: Free sheet.

MM: Did you sew it by hand, Madeline?

ML: No, he had a machine.

MM: Had the sewing machine?

ML: Yeah, that old-type machine you pump.

MM: And you knew how to use it?

ML: Yeah, I did. Old Singer machine because my mother was always using machine to sew.

MM: Did your mother make you your clothes?

ML: Some. Simple ones.

MM: And what else did they use the rice bags for?

ML: Well, and I made pillow slips. Out of the four bags, each one, I can make four pillow slips. I used all that kind of bed sheet and pillow cases. And on the edge, I put little prints so it looks pretty.

MM: Oh, how nice, Madeline.

ML: Yeah, I did all that. And the inside I would save. When I was married and having children, I used that for baby diapers. The inside.

MM: The rice bags, have two bags?

ML: Right, the inside [layer].

NP: It's amazing the uses you got out of this one bag.

MM: I think you could make underwear.

ML: Yeah, I did for Bob.

MM: (Chuckles) You did?

ML: He never forget that. I use with outside one.

MM: Oh, that would be so cute, right? That would be good. So gosh, you were at home, and making bed sheets with those rice—and you scoop the rice out. How about sugar? Would you put sugar in little bags?

ML: Well, the sugar came in a different type of bag. Not like the rice. It's almost like those gunny bags, something like that.

MM: Yeah, burlap?

ML: Yeah, I think so.

MM: And did you scoop it out into little bags, too?

ML: Yeah, we have a scoop. My father buys a big scooper and scoop that. He bought one big one and a small one. I took one for me and I don't know what happened.

MM: And then you'd have to weigh them. You must have had a scale.

ML: Yeah, we had an old-style scale. It hangs up and he had another one where you balance like that.

MM: The two pans?

ML: Yeah. He weigh them and he sold potatoes and everything that's little bigger. But the other one is just something like—it shows the thing goes around and you can see the weight—one pound, two pounds like that. Those were good; they're very good. I use them when Bob had a fishing boat. I took that down and make him use that.

MM: To weigh the fish.

ML: Yeah, the small fish, not the big ones. Or anything you can weigh on that—with that scale.

NP: Worked well.

ML: It did.

MM: Madeline, when you woke up in the morning, did customers come very early in the morning?

ML: No, I think most of them go out to work early in the morning.

MM: All right.

ML: Yeah, they spend a lot of time out working. Everyone.

MM: So shopping time is. . . .

ML: After. After school, towards evening they come and shop. Or the wives would come but then again, all the wives, they work, too. They work hard, especially the Japanese people, the ladies.

NP: What kind of work were they doing?

ML: Farming, yeah.

NP: Farming, coffee. . . .

ML: Yeah, and prepare home food like pickled things. Because I know the ones—my friends—they really worked and they made a lot of things home made. I guess they learned from Japan when they came out. How to preserve them, yeah. That's why I learned to make some—you know that pickled *daikon?* My father, I see how he does it so I try to do the same. But I don't have that barrel where he'd put it [the *daikon*] in and put a big rock [on top of the cover]. I have an American-made type.

NP: Would he sell that in the store?

ML: No, everybody make.

NP: Everybody made their own.

ML: Yeah.

NP: Okay, so this was for your family's use then. And you had to learn how to cook really fast, didn't you? If you took over.

ML: Well, we hardly eat meat, it was more chicken and pork. And we used corned beef in place of that. Little corned beef with cabbage. The simple kind.

MM: 'Cause Madeline, you said once, you think you were raised on the tomato sardines and rice.

ML: Yeah, tomato sardines.

MM: Because, thank God, you could just open the can, right?

ML: Yeah, and it would feed six of us children.

MM: One can?

ML: Yeah.

NP: Little bit, little bit, little bit.

ML: Little bit, yeah. And sometimes my father would heat them on the stove and chop maybe a round onion or something to mix and cook it with that. And that gets plenty. He add a little flavor, too. Maybe a little soy sauce or sugar, whatever and have a good flavor. So there were always six children and he. . . . But my father was always, we come first when he feeds us. He makes sure that we cleaned that plate up good, eat

everything. And he would eat just a little what he want, like miso he would cook and eat that. But he loved his fish. He always had his fish. Because he used to walk down from here all the way down to Keālia Beach with his rod and a basket and he comes home with fish.

MM: On the weekends, he'd do this?

ML: Or anytime if he feel he need to go.

NP: Get some food.

ML: And he makes me watch the store. Well, I was old enough to watch. And he goes down, early in the morning, walk—there's a trail from the church here.

MM: From Puka'ana?

ML: Yeah. And there's a trail going all the way down. When I grew up, I wanted—I was so curious how to get there. Two girls and I, we took that trail. I said, "Gee, and here my father went all the way to get food." The walking down is okay but coming home with that basket of fish. . . .

NP: How long does it take to walk it?

ML: Gee, maybe about—I would say about half an hour.

NP: So it must be a couple of miles.

ML: Yeah. But that trail was there way before I was born.

MM: Probably an old Hawaiian trail.

ML: Yeah, you come out, you hit the Catholic church, you pass until you come back to Catholic church.

MM: Is that where the trail comes out?

ML: From---yeah. And then from there he finds a spot to go fishing.

MM: Yeah, 'cause that's a big bunch of rocks out there. Big, flat area.

NP: Must have been plenty of fish back then.

ML: Oh yes. He never came home empty. But if it's rough, maybe, but otherwise he comes home with fish. And he cleans the fish before he brings home, sometimes. Nothing was

thrown away except the bone and the scales. He would save every bit, make soup, chop the bones. And that's how I learned a little bit from my dad.

MM: From watching him.

ML: Yeah.

MM: Oh yes, because Madeline, from the time when you got married in 1940 to Bob Leslie, but you were at home helping your father from the time you were thirteen to twenty.

ML: After I had all my children, I come home to help with the [store] books.

MM: Because you said you used to come up once a month to do the books for your dad.

ML: Yeah, and then sometimes twice.

MM: Oh, twice a month.

ML: Yeah, and I bring all my kids up. So my father have to watch them while I'm doing the books.

MM: Did you learn---who taught you how to keep the books?

ML: I followed the way he did.

MM: Your father kept the books in the family and you followed him.

ML: I followed him.

MM: Did anyone else in your family—so interested in the store as you were?

ML: Well, they all had their share of work and they learned how to work in the store. But after they left, things were so poor. My brothers have to go out to find job. So two went to Honolulu and then my sister went to school. She's the only one that finished high school. The rest, no.

MM: The one right under you? That sister?

ML: That sister.

NP: How did she manage to stay in school?

ML: I had a cousin in Honolulu, he worked with the city and county and they had no children of their own. So my sister, they kept her for the years that she went to school

when she was old enough to go, not too young. I think from—maybe from ninth grade or eighth grade.

MM: After your mother died, she went down.

ML: Yeah, she went down and she stayed with my cousin and she went to Farrington High School. I think was Farrington, yeah. And she graduated.

MM: That must have been kind of hard for you, Madeline.

ML: Yeah, I told my father---at that time, I felt—you know—because I didn't have education. But I learned a little bit from him. When he retired, my brother had the store for a while, my big brother.

NP: What's his name?

ML: Charles Shigeru [Fujihara]. Because you know Japanese style, the first son is the one to take over the business. And he did, but months went by, months. He couldn't keep up. They didn't make the payment in time to the wholesalers and when my father heard about it, he wasn't satisfied. It was not for him to take care the business. And then we had another brother in Honolulu. He went to see the two younger brothers, but they said no, they're doing better down there. Which is true. They had good jobs down there. And here, it's easy to sell but the collection was hard. The collection was very hard.

NP: People were still charging.

ML: Charging, and when they come to pay, they couldn't pay all. They just paid either one fourth or one half. And each time, accumulate the back. And they only had paid, I think was, once a month? That's right, yeah. I think once a month or twice a month. I think it was once a month.

NP: Would you send out---how would you get people to pay? Did they know that they had to pay on a certain day?

ML: They know but some brought *lau hala* weavings and some would bring—like my dad would buy their taro. And what else did he buy? Then he could sell it if he can. But the taro he bought because he bought Aiona's *poi* machine. See, they were the first ones that sold *poi* here.

NP: Oh, before Higashi.

MM: The Aionas.

ML: Yeah. They were the first ones that were selling *poi* here. Higashi did, but it was another man before him that had *poi* business.

MM: But the Aionas had this machine.

ML: Yeah, they had. They had other places, like the Sasakis, they had. And then after that, the young Japanese fellow bought—I forgot his name. He married a public health nurse. Sugai. Sugai came around to sell *poi*.

MM: Oh, he did?

ML: His wife was a public health nurse. She passed away. And in exchange, there were a lot of things. They would bring some other things like bunch of bananas.

MM: Mangos maybe, or oranges?

ML: Maybe yeah, they would buy. See, because my mother would bring all these fruits. My mother used to pack them in a box and she would write the names and she would deliver with a big—we had a truck. She would deliver down to Hoʻokena Beach and the *Humuʻula* used to come in—not the *Humuʻula*, the ones before *Humuʻula*.

MM: Before *Humuʻula*.

ML: Yeah, they had a big wharf down at Hoʻokena Beach. You remember you saw the wharf there before?

MM: I did, I did.

ML: It's all torn down. That's how we had a lot of things, too. It came by steamer. Certain items it comes. But my mother would box those things and deliver for them. Put it on the steamer. And I remember he had a name, this Chinese name that she would write on those boxes.

MM: Oh, she was selling it down to a Chinese store.

ML: Delivering, delivering it. To help deliver for the people that would bring—because they had no trucks and my mother had a truck. My dad's store had a big veranda. They would bring there all their avocados, and those *lemi wai,* whatever.

MM: Oh, the *lemi wai.* Passion fruit, kind of.

ML: Right, and bananas and she would box them and she got that marker, that black marker. Mark the name.

NP: And then it would go to the steamer and this . . .

ML: She would deliver them when the steamer comes in.

MM: That would be the *Hawai'i* or the *Kīlauea.* There were a lot of boats.

ML: Yeah, it was before *Humu'ula*. But *Humu'ula* did come here, too, but in her time was a different boat and she would deliver them down at Ho'okena Beach and in that corner there was Mr. Lincoln's post office. You remember old Mr. Lincoln?

MM: Yes, I do.

ML: Okay, right in that corner where the light post, that's where the post office was. No post office here at that time and my mother would pick up all the mail and newspapers. She would drive all to another road . . .

NP: Wow, she was a delivery person.

ML: Yeah, she did. She did all that, that's why it was too much for her.

MM: She'd drive the newspapers and the mail back up here into Keālia?

ML: No, you know when she picked those mails up for certain family, then she would just deliver them.

MM: Deliver it all to them?

ML: Well, whoever. Some she brings it back, they come to pick it up.

MM: At the store.

ML: Yeah, so there were many times she took me with her and, you know, the steamer comes in early in the morning. We'd go down and she does everything. My mother was a bigger woman than my dad and always had her pencil.

MM: Oh, in her hair---over her ear.

ML: Yeah, she had long hair [that] she [made into a] pug. You know before they had—their hair, they bind 'em up and put on the two side and cover their ears with the hair thing. Yeah. That's why my mother---that's why you saw her picture like that.

MM: Beautiful, beautiful woman.

ML: Both side, she had that, I guess that's old-fashioned. She was strong. She carried those fruit boxes.

NP: And she was pregnant half the time.

ML: Sometime. But when she'd get too big, then she don't drive. But she did lot of heavy work. I think that's why it was too much for her. She take 'em down, deliver and then come back.

MM: Could she drive the truck?

ML: She was the one. And this truck was—she gets out there and she crank the front.

NP: Is that a Model-A or something? Those old, old ones?

ML: The two side has those gate opening or something like that. It's a flatbed. It's not a big truck, now. It's a truck like how they build now.

MM: Little truck, kind of a little truck.

ML: Well, not too little either. But enough to haul all those things. And then she tells me go in the front and press a certain thing. And the thing would start again.

MM: Oh, the gas button or something, right? Boom, then she'd put the crank back.

ML: I think so, yeah. She did all that, busy as she was. But that's what my mother did. And the old post office, Mr. Lincoln, was there.

MM: And that family, the Nahinu family.

ML: Yeah, they had an estate there. Even the sheriff we had, Mr. Lazaro, he was the sheriff here.

MM: Oh, did he have an office, a sheriff's office?

ML: Yeah, the courthouse.

MM: Right up here by the courthouse, by the jail.

ML: Yes, it was a big courthouse. I wish I had the picture. Somebody has a picture. Big courthouse, big yard. And Mr. Ha'ae, that's my grandpa's cousin, he was the judge. And he had a son named after him. Was a police officer. They were all Hawaiians, police officers here.

MM: They were big.

ML: Big. But you know, I think that was a beautiful courthouse there, the yard. You know what kind of plants they have?

MM: Like that joy weed or something. Oh, I hope you can find the picture.

ML: I know, I wish. We never owned a camera. Not anybody own a camera. But that place was nice, the yard and everything. Well-kept. But they were good, old prisoners. They don't run away and they didn't do bad, bad things like today.

MM: So your father had a pool table for a while in the store?

ML: Yeah, in the store, yeah.

MM: Did men come to play pool?

ML: Yeah. My father is great in playing pool, he likes that. Ever since I was growing up I always see him play pool. Then my two brothers played pool, too. When I went to visit they even had a—they bought a table, they played pool. I said, "Gosh, if my father only see them."

MM: Did men come in the evening to play pool?

ML: Play, yeah.

MM: And would they also drink? Did your father sell liquor, also?

ML: He did not have any liquor that time.

MM: No liquor.

NP: Did you close the store at New Year's? Did you have any vacation times when the store closed?

ML: Yeah, we closed New Year's Day. Because they observed the New Year's Day.

NP: Was that the only time you closed or did you have other holidays?

ML: Well, we had Christmas and New Year. But when my father was living, he leave it open. But when I took over, I closed Christmas and New Year's because I need to be with my family.

MM: That's right. So Madeline, after Shigeru didn't do a good job and then the other brothers didn't want to come down from Honolulu.

ML: They didn't want to come back.

MM: Then your father asked you?

ML: Right, and I told him I don't want because I have my own business, the fish market.

MM: You were running Leslie's Fish Market.

ML: Right, right.

MM: In Kealakekua.

ML: Right, in Kealakekua. But he told me he don't want to take the store away from the people. That's what he told me. If he takes the store away, what the people going to have? He worry about them and I said, "There's another store." But this store was closed earlier, the Aionas.

MM: It shut down before.

ML: Way, way earlier. 'Cause Mr. Aiona died, and then Sam [Liau] had his business up Kainaliu.

MM: So Madeline, what year was it you took over Fujihara Store?

ML: He was living when he gave the store to me. Nineteen fifty-seven.

NP: Nineteen fifty-seven? Who was living?

ML: My dad was still living.

NP: Oh, okay.

ML: Then I also had the fish market but in order to keep the store going, I hired my brother's wife because my brother passed away. I hired her, she was staying in a cottage here and to open the store, I'd pay her. And every evening from four o'clock, I would close the market, come all the way down, take over, then she leaves.

MM: She goes back to her cottage.

ML: Back, yeah. And I would take over the store and go through all the books and see what we need. When the salesmen come, they would stop at the fish market to pick up orders from Hilo. Until finally, I said, "I can't keep up with this, two sides." I know I stayed there almost sixteen years.

NP: So which did you close? The fish market?

ML: I closed the fish market, yeah. Then I spent full-time here. Of course from then, I took over then I can do little better and the customers—I had all the ranch people.

MM: McCandless Ranch.

ML: McCandless Ranch and there's Ocean View, they would come. You know those mac[adamia] nut workers.

MM: Yes.

ML: I had some of them and I would give them credits because they made where they can take care their payments. And I limit them so much. And the ranch, too. I had all the customers there, but their pay was small so I just limit them so much. Although I have some very bad [customer] debts. It was something that—hard to collect because the father died and there's all these bills. Yeah, there was lots that I couldn't collect.

MM: Well, I guess maybe we should get on tape your story of how you moved Fujihara Store from one side of the road to the other side of the road.

ML: Well, the reason why because that property belonged to McCandless and that building was getting so old. And one time there was some rotten piece [i.e., floorboards] and good thing that person didn't go through.

MM: Put your foot on the floor?

ML: Yeah, because they were heavyset, these people that come to the store, these Hawaiians were big. So then I decided—oh, my father was living then. So he told me to go to McCandless, talk to Mrs. Marks and ask if we could get a long lease so we could put a new building. When I went to see her, she says, "No," she don't sell any lots like that. But she said, "You want to go ahead and put a new one, that's okay." But when I came, my father said he need to get legal papers.

MM: He wanted a guarantee.

NP: I don't blame him, to do something like that.

ML: So he was disappointed. He says, "That's okay, we can't save the old store." Until this girl here, owned this property, she had it out for sale, and through Mr. Okimoto, he came and told my dad. See, she left in his hands to sell for her.

MM: Had this store burned down? Did the Aiona Store burn down?

ML: Yeah, but not the whole building. I think it started from the bar. They had a bar—Sam [Liau] retails liquor, and the bar, and then the grocery store, and the gasoline pump.

MM: Oh, quite a big building.

ML: Oh yes, it's long. The family home was right in the same building.

MM: They all lived in Aiona Store.

ML: And the big water tank, you remember we used to get water tank? Those days?

MM: Oh yes, behind the house.

ML: So the fireman stuck their hose in, there wasn't enough water to kill that fire. But you see, all the termites gone.

MM: Aah, the termites are gone for sure, right?

ML: It was funny when he told me that. I said, "Oh gosh."

MM: Now Madeline, is it . . .

NP: I'm going to pause.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

MM: Okay, we're gonna . . .

NP: We'll stop for today and then we'll . . .

ML: Yeah, but aren't you folks tired of coming here every time?

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 35-3-2-00 and 35-4-2-00

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Madeline Leslie (ML)

Keālia, Kona, Hawai'i

April 18, 2000

BY: Maile Melrose (MM) and Nancy Piianaia (NP)

MM: We're back with Madeline Fujihara Leslie in Keālia, South Kona. And this is the second tape of our interview about Madeline's life in Keālia and her father's store that became her store, which was Fujihara Store.

ML: Right.

MM: And so Madeline, I think we were ending up last time talking about when you moved Fujihara Store from across the street.

ML: Oh, is that where we ended up the last time?

MM: Yes, mm-hmm.

ML: Yeah. Now, I remember, yeah.

MM: Okay. Who was the contractor who built your new store? Do you remember?

ML: Oh. It's Yukio Yamamoto.

MM: Do you remember how much it cost to build that store?

ML: Oh, I can't remember that.

MM: Okay. That's just fine. I remember you said you took a loan out. How Mr. Ackerman helped.

ML: No, a Mr. Dick Dennison. That's the time I started my loan with him at the time when I had a chance to buy the property.

MM: When you did the store with the contractor, did he draw up plans like an architect or . . .

ML: Right, he did.

MM: . . . how did that work? Did he show them to you and you talked about it as a family?

ML: Yeah. Because he built several stores before. And we made some changes.

MM: And did your father help you? Was he interested at that point?

ML: Well, at that time, he was still living, but then he passed away in 1963. But he knew well ahead that I was going forward to put up a new building, you know, for a store because I bought the place.

MM: That's right, because you said that the [old] Aiona Store, it burned down, right?

ML: Right, right. It burned down long, long ago. Because they had retired earlier after the couple passed away.

MM: Mr. and Mrs. Aiona?

ML: Yeah. And Sam [Liau] took over the business. And that's when he put up a building to put a bar and a retail liquor.

MM: That's what you said. It was several businesses stuck together.

ML: Uh huh [yes]. He had a building where he had enough people that would come to the restaurant. And they would sell food. But it didn't last long. So he closed the restaurant and he put up just the bar. People could come in and sit and have their drinks.

MM: Okay. And so the bar was successful.

ML: I think he did better with the retail. But after the old building burned down, I guess he decided to close up.

MM: Do you know why the building burned? What happened?

ML: I think they had a man that took care the place. Maybe he must have been cooking something and forgot. You know, the old stove, kerosene stove?

MM: Yeah.

ML: It could have been from there. I was working up Kealakekua then.

MM: You were at Leslie's Fish Market?

ML: No, no. I was working at the hospital then. Nineteen thirty-six.

MM: Oh, gosh it really burned down a long time ago.

ML: Yeah, long time ago.

(Visitor knocks on door. Taping stops, then resumes.)

MM: 'Cause you said you were working at Kona Hospital, 1936?

ML: Right. As a maid. Old Kona Hospital.

MM: So you're just a young—you're seventeen?

ML: That time, eighteen.

NP: Did you live down at South Kona then when you were working at the hospital?

MM: No, they had an old building for all the maids' quarters. And there were a couple of nurses. We all had a big cottage, like.

NP: But you left home then? You left your father?

ML: Yeah. I only worked up there for a year.

MM: Was the hospital big, Madeline?

ML: Don't you remember the building, what it looks like? The green building? It's maternity ward on one side. Those steps, high steps going up.

MM: No, I don't remember.

ML: You don't remember that building? I thought you would recognize that. I mean, that building was there for a long, long time.

MM: I should go look at a picture of it.

ML: Yeah, it's still there.

MM: Still there. So lots of mothers came and had their babies there?

ML: Right. There was a private room.

NP: And how long did you work there?

ML: A year and eight months.

NP: I wonder, did your father miss you? Did he want you to come back?

ML: No, I would come home when I have a day off.

NP: And still do his books for him?

ML: Sometimes, yeah. Most he writes in Japanese and I have to pick out and translate the meaning. That time I remember how to read those plain Japanese words. Well, I still remember some, but not all. And when I went to work at the hospital I would catch a taxi to go to work. Was fifty cents or seventy-five cents for one way.

NP: From Keālia?

ML: From Keālia to. . . . I would call. We had a taxi lady here and another one. And then when I come back I would ride Oshima's.

NP: Taxi?

ML: Mm-hmm [yes].

MM: How much did they pay you, do you think, Madeline?

ML: Um, twenty dollars a month. But many of us girls had no education. And when I told them I cannot, they said that I [wouldn't] go up there to work just as a maid. So that's why I took the job, to learn something.

NP: Yes, you would learn. 'Cause they did surgery there. I mean, they sewed people up.

ML: Yeah, but we didn't have accidents like this today or fights or something like that. It was different.

NP: Maybe more cowboy accidents or fisherman accidents.

ML: Yeah, very seldom we had emergency like that. Or maybe when somebody's going to have a baby, then you hear the cars coming up. Get ready with everything. So our job was to help make dressings, pads. We have to have the cheesecloth, something like cheesecloth, wrap the pads. We made that when we were on night shift.

NP: Oh, they had night shift for the maids, too?

ML: Yeah, we worked there from seven to seven.

NP: You all took turns, night shift, day shift?

ML: Mm-hmm [yes]. And we did do something at night up till maybe eleven o'clock, then I could just rest. Lie down and rest. We took turns.

NP: Where did you stay? Did you have a cottage that you . . .

ML: Yeah, for all the girls, we had cottage, the nurses. We were all in one building. There were several rooms. But the maids shared two in one room.

NP: Oh, and you were young. The maids were young.

ML: Yeah, I was still young.

NP: Was it a good time? Did you enjoy yourself?

ML: I did. Something new for me to learn. And, well, I saw many things like. . . . We bathed the mothers that had a baby. And if the nurses are too busy, we put on a gown, take the baby to be fed by the mother.

NP: Did you ever want to be a nurse after that?

ML: Well, I did. I had an aunt from Honolulu. She was a schoolteacher. I told her I liked the job and she said, "Well, come down." And she was going to try get me into Kapiʻolani [Hospital]. But when I went down there, I didn't have enough schooling. If I had [schooling] up to ninth grade, they would accept me. But I only went to seventh grade. So I made some friends and then they took me down with them to work at Waikīkī, cleaning apartments. Then I had six dollars a week, I started.

NP: Oh, more than working at the hospital, then.

ML: But there I had to ride the bus, which was ten cents a ride. You remember? Way back. The buses were just ten cents. And I could eat a good meal for twenty-five cents or fifty cents. Twenty-five cents is good enough for me to eat.

NP: So how long did you stay in Honolulu, then?

ML: Not very long. About close to a year. Then I came home because. . . . Well, when I left, my brothers were growing up, too, so my father managed to take care of them.

NP: He could handle it, your brothers.

ML: Yeah, he could, with my sister. One sister, the youngest. And the other sister, she went to Honolulu.

NP: Okay. So your dad was still running the store down here. He probably wanted you kids to go out and to find . . .

ML: Yeah, after we grew up, he said okay. 'Cause I had a cousin ask for me to come out to work at the pineapple factory [i.e., cannery]. Pineapple, I only work one night and I got all itchy. Those acids were strong, right? And I got all sores. I wasn't fit for that. So I didn't go back work because I might get worse. So that's why I went out to work as a maid.

NP: Okay. But then you married Mr. [Robert] Leslie in 1940.

ML: Oh, wait. Nineteen forty, yeah.

NP: So how did—you must have come back to Kona.

ML: I came back and I started picking coffee, or sorting coffee. But no maid job after that. I only worked at the hospital year and seven months.

NP: Okay. So a year and seven months at Kona Hospital. And then Honolulu for over a year.

ML: Maybe, or less.

NP: Or little less.

ML: I can't remember. And then I came back, helping with my dad at the store.

NP: Now, was this the new store or the old store?

ML: Old store.

NP: Old store, okay. 'Cause this is pre-World War II. The new store was after World War II.

MM: Nineteen sixty-six.

ML: Sixties, right. After I paid up for the place.

NP: Can you describe what the old store was like?

ML: Well, I remember he had a little room for a barbershop and a bedroom. And then another bedroom. I think he built those, adding materials to build a room slowly. And the kitchen. And he had a little space big enough to put this pool table. And I guess people here, the men, found time to come and play. Otherwise, what would they do?

NP: Do you remember how much he charged for pool?

ML: I can't remember. I don't know. 'Cause those days, things were cheap then.

NP: And the interior of the store area, how was that designed? What did it look like?

ML: Well, the building was long, like this. And the end had a little gas station pump. And he had a drum with oil for people to fill, buy oil, too. He had a drum and you just open up the tap, fill up, and take 'em and put 'em in the car. Then he had another drum for kerosene 'cause people needed kerosene to do their cooking. So my dad would always sell lots of kerosene.

MM: And that's when people brought their own bottles.

ML: Yeah, they did. And some would bring a five-gallon can. Like those who lived far.

NP: They needed a lot then.

ML: And for their lamp, and stove, everything.

NP: Everything, right?

ML: Was with kerosene, yeah. Even the fishermen went out torching with [kerosene]. My mom used to have that [torch]. Long bamboo with the rag on the top. And they lit up that thing and they go out fishing along the shoreline.

NP: And like torches so it burns quite a long time, this burning rag?

ML: Yeah. Neat, the way they did the rag, you know. And it would last until they go and come back.

MM: And your mother used to make those?

ML: They go torching. Oh, all these people go torching nighttime. So that was the ladies. "We go torching tonight." Okay, they go out torching. Oh, they enjoyed that time. The Hawaiian people, they had very little. No cars, but they got together at Hoʻokena Wharf. They would make a big party, somebody's birthday. And it's always down at Hoʻokena. Because people didn't have a big house to make a party. So it's always down at Hoʻokena.

MM: Because the wharf was there and everybody could use it?

ML: And they had the brackish water well.

MM: They did, down there?

ML: Yeah. They had the well where you drop your bucket and pick up your water. Clean.

MM: And mostly Hawaiians [were living] down there?

ML: All Hawaiians. Maybe a couple of Filipinos and Koreans. But that's the way they lived.

NP: Can you continue with the interior of the store?

ML: Yeah, okay. The building was so long. And my dad would have a veranda. It's about twelve feet wide. It's like a porch. And old-fashioned building with those old windows, small little windows all the way [around]. But then I remember he had the barbershop. And there was a hallway. And then the pool table. And gradually he added the groceries. And he kept adding another room. I don't know how he did it, but each time—they were not new materials, most second-hand. Until the store got so big.

NP: Would he build his own shelves or counters?

ML: Yeah. And sometimes he would have his friend to come and help. That's why I often wondered, how did they learn to do things by themselves? Like my dad learned barbershop.

MM: He taught himself how to cut hair?

ML: He learned from another friend, I believe. And then he opened up his little room. He had a mirror and a little water sink. No water coming through there. But he had boiled some water. Whoever needed a shave, so he can have hot water. It's a small room. I would say about eight by ten, the size of the barbershop. Too bad we didn't have the picture of that store. We did have.

NP: You did at one point.

ML: Yeah, but then the termites got in.

MM: Did he have a fancy barber chair?

ML: The old style, I remember this swing.

MM: It swiveled around?

ML: Yeah. Oh, well, for twenty-five cents, that was something. If you get about ten heads a day.

MM: That's right, that's $2.50.

ML: Yeah, but the children cost fifteen cents. The little kids, school kids? Fifteen cents.

NP: Did he cut ladies' hair, too?

ML: I don't remember. But all the old people come down, they relax. You know, the seat go down [i.e., reclined]. And he's cleaning their ear and shaving. For forty-five cents, shave and haircut.

MM: Oh, a shave and a haircut, forty-five cents. Madeline, I wanted to ask you. When you were a girl, did you see Chinese people with the long queue coming out of their head?

ML: I don't remember seeing. I know we had Chinese family, but I don't remember seeing them. I saw that in pictures, but not anyone that lived here. The old Japanese ladies, I know how they dress. Real farm kind. Wrap around. You know, they dress so poor, but it's clean. And they always clean, but that's the way they take care themselves, with long sleeves, going out to work in the field, tomato field or coffee. And they were real farmers' wives. They worked.

NP: What do you call the kind of clothes, you said, they wrapped around?

ML: Yeah, old. I wonder if some people still have that? It's wraparound kind and then an apron, the last thing. But they didn't have pants like this.

NP: Were these the Japanese or the Chinese?

ML: The Japanese people. Yeah, we had lot of Japanese families. And they sew their own, right?

MM: We wanted to ask you. Here's your father. You came back to help. Did your father sell clothes in the store?

ML: Materials. And pants for boys to go to school. There was a salesman that comes. He brings t-shirt, working—I mean, school shirts.

MM: School shirts.

ML: Yeah. And undershirt with sleeveless. But pants, he always had them on the shelf, open, all the sizes.

NP: Like khaki pants?

ML: Khaki and those denim pants. Yeah, he had that.

MM: For boys.

ML: For boys. And I think he had for men, too. But it was sewed different.

NP: Do you remember where the salesmen came from or . . .

ML: I remember two from Honolulu and the rest came from Hilo.

NP: Do you remember their names or the company they worked for?

ML: Well, the salesmen that came around, I know one of them was Mr. Nomura. There were plenty of them. Y. Hata is still there.

NP: In Hilo?

ML: In Hilo. American Trading, all those. But Honolulu was just two that I remember. Union Supply Company, maybe, where my dad would buy the pants to sell.

NP: Oh. And your father would have to pay for it ahead of time . . .

ML: No, they give you thirty days. But he would just keep maybe three of one size to make it twelve and worthwhile shipping them up.

MM: So they'd ship them up on the steamer and collect them down at Hoʻokena. Bring them up.

ML: Yeah. Then later on the rest of the things came through Kailua Wharf. No plane that time. Everything was down at the old, old wharf. Not this new one.

MM: Oh, the same place?

ML: The same place, but it was a . . .

MM: But it was a wooden one.

ML: The old pier.

MM: Yeah. And the big roof on top of it.

ML: Right, right.

MM: So you'd have to drive further to get in the truck to drive down there to pick up the supplies.

ML: Right. But I didn't drive at that time. I didn't know how to drive.

MM: So your father had to do this?

ML: My father or he had someone. There's always somebody doing, I mean, would do something, you know. Because when I had the store, I had to pick up all the Primo beer that came from Honolulu down at the wharf.

NP: Down in Kailua?

ML: It wasn't here. It was in Honolulu. So I have to go down and pick up the Primo beer with another man on the station wagon or a truck.

MM: Oh. That was heavy. That was kind of hard.

ML: Right. But I always had someone to go.

MM: To help you out.

ML: (Speaks to someone.) Oh, we had groceries and we had dry goods like fishing supplies.

NP: Can you describe, like tell us all, as many groceries as you can remember. What did you have?

ML: Well, for the people here, the main thing was corned beef, sardines, and codfish, we would sell by the whole piece because it was only fifteen cents a pound.

MM: And how did that come? What kind of package . . .

ML: A whole thing. Just like that. It comes in a crate, a little crate, and it's all laid out. But that, where did it come from? I don't know. And everybody buys one whole piece. 'Cause they'll keep. You don't need refrigerator. They're dried.

NP: And which nationalities would buy the codfish? Would everybody buy it or some . . .

ML: Every nationality. Well, we only had Hawaiians and Chinese and Filipinos.

NP: So not the Portuguese. You didn't have Portuguese?

ML: Mm mm [no]. I only had those half. Half Portuguese.

NP: And how would they prepare it?

ML: Well, some people would just soak in the water to let it little soften up and cook it. Some would make soup. I even tasted this soup with codfish. Shred 'em up, they put it with tomatoes. And it's good. I never knew how to cook that, but I cooked [for] my father, Japanese-style. He soak it and put little sugar and shoyu. And it takes a short time to cook that.

NP: Would it become soft when you soak it?

ML: Yeah, after that, yeah. And some, I've seen some Hawaiians, they just put 'em on the charcoal and eat it like that. Although it smells, the way they eat is good. It's *'ono.* (Chuckles)

MM: That's right. And that's the important thing, no refrigeration . . .

ML: No, no.

MM: . . . so fish was good.

ML: And my father would buy soy—you know, the shoyu? Comes in a big, from Japan, those barrels. About this, about . . .

MM: A wooden barrel.

ML: Yeah, a wooden barrel. Well wrapped. And he would have to fill up the empty bottles and sell them.

MM: How did he get the shoyu out of the barrel?

ML: Oh, there's a little space where you take off that. It's a wooden thing. They had a rope real tight around. Japan kind of rope. And it comes like that. It's big, yeah. I think that's five gallons or three gallons. I think it's five-gallon size. Because they wouldn't ship out that. . . .

MM: A little one.

ML: Yeah.

MM: Had to be big.

ML: Because then my father has to bottle them up in a quart size and he sells them. That's the way they came first when I first worked at the store.

MM: In these wooden barrels.

ML: Yeah.

NP: Would you have salt salmon, too?

ML: Yeah. I don't know [from] who he bought those salt salmon. Even the butterfish. Comes in a little container. If those people would like to buy one half, he just cut 'em up in just one half. You know the center?

MM: Yeah, split it.

ML: Split it. Sometimes people would buy the whole thing. Depends on how big a family. But the codfish was a good seller, that time. They used to call that codfish "*bacalhau*."

MM: *Bacalhau*. What kind of word is that?

NP: Portuguese name. Portuguese.

ML: Portuguese, yeah. People all buy. That's our school lunch, too, sometimes. Make a little rice ball with codfish, be all cut up.

MM: That would be good.

ML: Smells, but.

MM: Were there things like beans? Did anybody in Kona eat beans?

ML: Well, we had all dried beans. You remember the soybean?

MM: Yeah.

ML: And we had *azuki,* the one that makes *anpan*. That comes here, too. And what else. Lot of things came, was shipped from away.

MM: From away?

ML: From Honolulu, rather. They're the wholesalers that they buy and then from there, my dad would buy from them.

MM: Tea? Did you sell tea?

ML: Tea, Japan tea. And Chinese tea. We always had Chinese tea. They're the best seller. Fifteen cents, a little package, with the little red coloring and then the twine around. They buy fifteen cents just one package, it lasts long.

NP: Was it the solid tea? Was it leaf tea or the solid Chinese tea?

ML: Leaf, yeah but it's dried up good that you couldn't see the leaf. And that's the best seller tea, the Chinese tea. We had Japan tea also, but the Chinese tea, every nationality would drink it. So that's all we had. When we grew up, was tea, tea all the time. Chinese tea.

MM: When you were little, breakfast time, did your parents ever give you orange juice or something?

ML: No, none of that. I remember we used to eat just cracker with no butter. And once in a while I would ask my dad if we could have a block of butter. 'Cause he sells the butter. It was only fifteen cents a block.

NP: Do you know where you got the butter from?

ML: From American Factors or Hilo.

NP: Were the crackers from Hilo Macaroni [Company]?

ML: Hilo Macaroni. And there was another company from Honolulu, Love's Bakery. They had their crackers, too. Come in cream, soda, saloon pilot. Then the cookies. But then we had it from Hilo because it would be cheaper bringing them over on the freight, see.

MM: And fresher, too.

ML: Yeah, yeah, uh huh.

MM: Would they deliver it to you here? Would they . . .

ML: Well, the truck would pick them up and we pay the truck man. Everything was on trucks that they haul. We even had the taxis that pick up passengers to go to Hilo every day or every other day. People all travel with taxi—nobody had cars then. I mean, some of the people didn't have a car.

MM: Did anybody bring a donkey to your father's store? Do you remember people coming with the donkey?

ML: Well, lots of the Japanese people had donkeys, and so did some Hawaiians, they would come shop, and put [the groceries] on, tie 'em up, so the donkey would pack those things home for them. After they buy their groceries, they put 'em in a bag and then have two bags with some kind of thing around. And then it would balance, and the donkey go back home, up the hill.

MM: So you did see that . . .

ML: Yeah, they came, too, yeah. That was their transportation like. They buy canned goods, like corned beef, cracker, those needed items, they buy. And people live way up, about a mile up the hill. And only by trail, no cars. So they would bring their donkey. And I've seen them put two bags across. Then the donkey would go home with an even weight. Yeah, all had donkeys. I used to ride them, too.

MM: You used to ride the donkey?

ML: That's my grandfather's donkey.

MM: Mr. Haʻae's donkey?

ML: Yeah.

MM: Could he ride a donkey, too?

ML: Yeah.

MM: Donkeys were so tiny in those days, Madeline.

ML: I know, but they worked hard, those donkeys, for all the families that used to come shopping.

MM: Did you ever pick food for a donkey? Some ladies talk about picking cane tops for food.

ML: No, I never did that.

MM: No, because your family didn't have a donkey.

ML: No. It was the neighbors that had donkeys.

MM: Okay. And when these families lived like a mile up the road . . .

ML: Some of them, yeah. All foot trail.

MM: Foot trail. Are these coffee farmers up there?

ML: Well, there were more Hawaiians up the hill, up the mountainside, and they would plant taro, and sweet potatoes, or whatever they could plant. And things were growing real nice up there. Because I went up to see my grandpa's place. He had taro all growing.

MM: Oh, he did? Your grandfather lived like a mile up the road, too?

ML: Yeah. He planted lot of taro because they eat lot of *poi.* And sweet potatoes. And some of them, like my dad, he planted peanuts along the rock wall.

MM: And these were successful?

ML: Yeah, we ate. My father would boil them for us to eat. Not those big ones, but those little ones, you know. And you would get three pieces in one after he boiled it. They grew well right at the old store.

NP: Did you sell any fresh vegetables or. . . .

ML: Cabbage. The main one is onion and potatoes and cabbage. Those round head cabbage. But the Japanese people all grew their green onions, *daikon,* and eggplant, all those things. My dad would plant some, too, for us. But I don't know how they all lived like that. And not too many people got sick, too, before, yeah, the old people.

MM: I think so. Because, Madeline, did you go to a dentist when you were a little girl? Was there any dentist there?

ML: Well, Nakamaru lived so far.

MM: Hōlualoa.

ML: Hōlualoa. And once I had a bad tooth. And my father couldn't drive us up there. And there's no way to get up there. So I stayed there. And he would go in the yard and pick up some kind of green shoots. And tell us to chew it.

MM: Did it help?

ML: Mm-hmm [yes]. Until I went out to work, I was able take care of all my teeth and get a, what you call, false one here.

MM: Oh, little bridge.

ML: Bridge, yeah.

MM: Yeah, was hard for kids. 'Cause did your father have candy, any candy in the store?

ML: That, you got. Candy. (MM laughs.) He had candies and he had a cooler with bottled soda. And you put a [block of] ice in the cooler. And after that, he got those electric ones.

MM: So that was after when you got the ice and the cooler and everything maybe . . .

ML: Yeah, the stores all had soda. They were real cheap, five cents. Five cents, bottled soda.

NP: And where were those from?

ML: They came from Kuramoto up here. You remember Mr. Kuramoto used to run the bus for the kids to go to school? Well, as a side job he had Kuramoto Soda Works. And I think I kept one bottle of that and I don't remember where I put it.

MM: It was, yeah, in those wooden cases? Orange, pink and . . .

ML: Yeah, it holds twenty-four, all different color, yeah.

MM: That was a good seller. People liked that.

ML: Yeah, and my father would sell some workmen's boots because of all these people here. My dad would buy working shoes and the people would come and buy. The kind of *tabi*.

MM: *Tabi*s, the fishermen like . . .

ML: Yeah, two different kind. One is the denim type to go fishing and one is the rubber [type] that was made in Japan. And he would get the American-made boots for people to go out, do some work. He had all kind of sizes, too. I still can picture those boots. And when people buy, then he'd reorder again.

MM: Did you have a Sears catalog in your store?

ML: We had Walter Field.

MM: Walter Field.

ML: Walter Field Company. That's the first one I remember. It's a little like a magazine. And you look at all the things that you want. You send in your order and when it comes at the post office, you go and pick it up to pay, too.

MM: C.O.D., cash on delivery.

ML: C.O.D., yeah. C.O.D.

MM: So your dad was the address for people who wanted to order things?

ML: No, people all have their own catalog, a tiny book. And everyone who wants to order things, they would order directly. But all C.O.D. Then after that, the Montgomery Ward came, and the Sears came. Sears came with a big book.

MM: That's right. So it came to the post office. Was the post office down in Hoʻokena still?

ML: Well, after that, they moved the post office up here. You know, where Mr. Thompson is, Willie Thompson's home? Okay, across the street where Judge Haʻae was staying? He took care of the post office. He ran that post office there after he retired.

MM: Oh, from being a judge, he became the postmaster?

ML: Right. And in his own property, they built a cute little building. It's almost like that old Keauhou Post Office. So he had that. Then when he passed away, then Mrs. Nancy Smith—you remember John Smith, the police officer before?

MM: Yeah.

ML: Okay, then they built one right—not too far, about 500 feet from here. A little tiny post office. Kaimalino.

MM: 'Cause up here is Keālia, right?

ML: This is Keālia.

MM: This is Keālia. And the beach is all Hoʻokena?

ML: Hoʻokena and Keālia.

MM: And Keālia, too?

ML: Right. But the old post office was right in Hoʻokena. Where Mr. Lincoln used to run.

MM: Right down by the harbor, by the wharf.

ML: By the pier. Just facing the wharf. That's where the post office was. In that corner they had that old-style lamp stand. You put it on to light.

NP: Oh, was a gas lamp.

ML: Yeah.

MM: Still there. The old lamp stand is still there.

ML: It's still there?

MM: Yeah. It's amazing.

ML: It was popular there at that time. Had a store there, just before you get to that wall. Old Japanese fellow. He was a bachelor.

MM: And he had a store down in Hoʻokena?

ML: A small little room. Just enough to take care the people down there, the needed supplies.

MM: And so Madeline, when you came back, this is before you got married to Mr. Leslie.

ML: Yeah, I came back.

MM: Was Keālia bigger than it is now or smaller? How many people . . .

ML: Well, many people moved away, especially all the Japanese people. All of them moved away from here except for Mr. Aoyagi's family. 'Cause all his children were born here. But we had many Japanese people, hard-working people and their children, they all moved away.

MM: Why did they move away?

ML: Because they lived only on coffee farms. First, they had their children to go out and work. The children were educated to become teachers, some of them, and well, go out and work better jobs and earn money. Finally, the parents moved with them.

MM: The kids got enough money, maybe, to buy a new house, this and that. So the Japanese all left Keālia.

ML: And they took care of their families.

MM: So the Japanese left, but the Hawaiians remained, you think, here?

ML: Most remained. But the ones who went out to work, they left. But their parents were still here till they got old and passed away.

MM: Because I think, last time, you were saying you had a wonderful community hall here.

ML: Yeah.

MM: It's all gone now. But it sounded like Keālia used to be more active.

ML: Oh, yes. Everything was pretty active here. People would come for concerts, and bands, and dance in that little hall. And all the politicians would come and, you know, they'd speak out. And they would bring somebody to play music after each one gets through [giving the political speech]. It was real, real Hawaiian style. But people don't do that today.

MM: No.

ML: And then Mr. Yajima folks would bring their machine and silent picture every once a week. They had a silent picture here. Just Mr. and Mrs. Yajima, [they had] no children. And they had a silent picture every Friday.

MM: And is it nighttime when . . .

ML: Nighttime, yeah.

MM: . . . it used to get all dark?

ML: They had that machine going.

MM: Where did they come from, the Yajimas?

ML: You know where, oh, it's right where, you know Mune's Service Station?

MM: Mm-hmm. Okay.

ML: You come up this way. The Yajimas were there. And then they had a restaurant, Japanese restaurant, was popular.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MM: Yajima Restaurant. And it was popular.

ML: Yeah. And then he would bring the silent picture here with his movie machine.

MM: And did the wife take the money as you walked in? Did Mrs. Yajima . . .

ML: Yeah, somebody was always there to collect fifteen cents, ten cents, quarter.

MM: And you kids all loved to go?

ML: Well, sometimes we missed. But then at that time they used to have continuation [i.e., serial] pictures. And then it says, "Continue next week." And people liked to come back. And lot of kids, adults, too, come to watch the pictures for fifteen cents and twenty-five cents.

MM: And then you all walk home in the dark.

ML: Yeah, well, we—the building was right here. My house was just across.

NP: Close.

MM: So do you remember some of the movies? The ones that. . . .

ML: I wish, but I can't remember the titles. And I think all those people at that time, they're not here anymore. That's way back, yeah.

MM: Were they American movies?

ML: Oh, yes. American movies. Yeah. And that hall was made like when people get married, they have the wedding—I mean, the *lūʻau* in there. Every time somebody get married, they would rent. Because where else would they have the party?

MM: There's no hotel down here.

ML: And their house is so small. Unless you have a big yard. But this was always for every purpose that the people need. And we had the school kids from Hoʻokena play basketball. They put a basketball ring, both sides . . .

MM: Turned it into a gym. (Laughs)

ML: Yeah. So I don't know why they tore that building down. It was handy for everybody here. Even the politicians. Because the candidates would come up and have their speech. The bus goes to Hōnaunau Beach, pick up all the voters. And free ride and listen to all these people. Especially the Hōnaunau Beach area, lot of Hawaiians. And the bus would pick them up. Free bus. I guess the candidates who were running would pay for the bus. And they all would come up and listen to the speakers. And sometimes they have a few play music in between.

MM: Sure, *hula* girls.

ML: Well, I don't know about *hula* girls, but the singing, I remember. I always wondered, why did they tear that building down? It was so handy for all, for Keālia.

MM: Yeah. So Madeline, where did you get married?

ML: At St. Benedict's.

MM: At St. Benedict's, at the Painted Church?

ML: The Painted Church.

MM: How did you meet Mr. Leslie?

ML: Well, one year, after I came back from Honolulu, and of course, I was keeping busy with coffee picking and sorting. And my cousin—you know where Stan's Fishery is?—my cousin, Moku Haʻae, the daughter got married to one of the Cho boys, Harry Cho's brother. And so the party was held there. The house was there. They had a big area, and the party was there. And somehow, my cousin and few others said, "Let's go up and see Mr. Alameida," blind man, had a concert up Konawaena School gym. So I had a ride with my cousin folks.

Then we went up and watched John Alameida that time. He was a blind man. Then intermission, everybody goes out to use the *lua.* You had to go out from the gym and walk right where the old office is, the Konawaena School, downstairs. They have one side for the girls and one side for the boys. So intermission, we went out to use, you know, and then come back. And lot of people come out from the hall just to get fresh air. And they were blocking all the walkway of that steps, when you come out from the gym.

MM: Yeah. I remember the old gym.

ML: You remember they had—yeah, you step, step, walk.

MM: Step, mm-hmm. A lot of stairs.

ML: I went with the girl that's across the street. She's still here yet. Hannah Kiwaha. And she and I walked out together to go use the restroom. We were walking up and Bob was sitting on one of the stairs, with somebody else. I think he asked Hannah who I was and Hannah introduced me to him. And that's it.

(Laughter)

MM: That was it.

ML: And after that, he called Aiona Store. Hannah worked at the store. And they had this old telephone you have to ring.

MM: The crank?

ML: Yeah, the crank. And she would call me to come answer the phone. But we had a phone.

MM: You had your own phone, right?

ML: Yeah. So it was him calling. Then he would drive up at night, come to visit till finally I went out with him. He would come almost every week.

MM: Okay. From Nāpōʻopoʻo.

ML: Yeah. Then Sundays he would pick me up. Because Sunday, I have my own chores to do. So he would pick me up, go riding about hour and a half, then bring me back. Because my dad was home. Well, my dad didn't say anything. We went on. And sometimes I'm in the kitchen doing something, you know. And he would come and he would park the car on the road. And my dad comes in, says, "That boy is out there."

(Laughter)

ML: And all the old-timer boys around, they come to the store, play guitar and sing. Because we had a big veranda and two long benches. So all these community boys would end up there because we had a store. And they would play music, and sing. Then we'd close the store about eight o'clock.

MM: At night?

ML: Yeah.

MM: Oh, wow.

ML: Seven, eight o'clock. And then they would all go home. You see, those days, things were different. Every time, I don't know if he's coming. He don't tell me. But my father comes in, "Oh, he's outside."

MM: Did you go outside and sit with the community boys and listen to the music?

ML: Sometimes. But we all went school together. We were just like brothers and sisters. We were very close. We grew up with them. No fighting. We were just like brothers and sister, actually, all these kids here. We had houses all along. And they had their families. I was the only one that had no mother, see. But they were, even the neighbors, were all good to us kids. Always welcome us to their places. And finally the boys in Keālia noticed Bob always coming up here. I don't know, but somebody made a remark, "What is he doing up here?" You know, to come all the way here from Nāpōʻopoʻo.

So finally, it went on and on for months, and months, and months. When we decided to get married, he took me down one Sunday to his house to meet his parents. And then when I came back, I always come back early. I told my father that I met Bob's parents. He was kind of disappointed. He told me, Japanese style, I don't go to the family house, for a girl to go. That's the way he taught me. I said, "I didn't know I was going down there. He just drove me down and introduced me to his parents, and his brothers and sisters."

So then finally, we wanted to get married after so long. And you know, Japanese style, they have a middleman to take message and bring back.

MM: Yeah, the marriage . . .

ML: Yeah, it was the Japanese-[language] school teacher. And finally, they all came up. You know, we had an old house and the kitchen had old benches. So both his parents came up. And my dad and the Japanese[-language] school teacher.

MM: You did get a middleman, then. Your father went and got the Japanese[-language] school teacher?

ML: Yeah. Well, because he taught us in school and he was my father's old friend from Japan. But he was teaching Japanese[-language] school. But he [had] retired already. Another woman came to take his place. And so, then they planned to get our marriage, something like that. And oh, couple of weeks later, you remember Father Eugene Oldman?

MM: Yes.

ML: The first Catholic priest that I remember. He came one day and he came to the store and he told me, "I hear you're going to marry Bob Leslie." He shakes his head. He said, "He got lot of girlfriends." (MM gasps.) You see, because I was just like his. . . . See, he married my mother and father at the rectory.

MM: Father Eugene.

ML: Father Eugene. And when we were all born, we were baptized Catholic. Except two boys were left for my father. My father was a Buddhist. So till today they are not baptized. But it's good because they married, one a Baptist girl, and one married to a Buddhist. Well, that's my father's religion, yeah?

MM: Right, right.

ML: So then, remember I told you folks that my father used to deliver *poi* down to Nāpōʻopoʻo all the way. Exchange with *lau hala* hat.

MM: That's right. Exchange with the lady weavers for it.

ML: Yeah. And sometimes, because my father had a grocery store, they would ask him if he would bring couple of canned goods down. It was all exchanged with the weaving.

MM: All for *lau hala?* So he'd take canned goods, *poi. . . .*

NP: And the *lau hala* would be sold in the store?

ML: Right. But I'm going back to where Bob. . . . Then my father, the following week, you know, the news got around fast in that community. So my father went the next time. They told him, "I hear your girl going to get married to that boy." They all shook their head. And my father got worried. He told me, oh, when he went down to deliver, all the neighbors and some of his uncles or whoever, they think I'm not going to have a good marriage.

MM: They thought he was a playboy, you think?

ML: Well, I don't know why. He grew up with them. But my father had to go down and they told him these things when the news got around. You know how fast the news get around. So he came home, he told me, why don't I hold off the wedding till September. Because we had planned to get married in June. Well, my grandfather Ha'ae, the jail keeper, old as he was, he came down, he got into the picture, too, because he felt I was going to get married.

MM: Was he happy? Because Bob is part Hawaiian, right?

ML: His mom is part Hawaiian and part Irish. The father was German, English, Hawaiian, I think. But you know, he looks pure *haole.*

MM: Pure *haole.* And Bob looks very *haole.*

ML: Blue eyes and very fair.

MM: And here you are, little Japanese-Hawaiian girl, right? Kind of different.

ML: It is. And well, before we got married, or before I met Bob, I have a cousin in Hilo that married a fireman down Keaukaha. So my grandfather, who happened to be living yet, asked my father if he could take me to Hilo with my cousin. And we stayed there few days in Hilo at Keaukaha. Then one day my cousin and the husband took us up to the fire station where her husband worked. And while we were there, they introduced us to some of the boys working there.

MM: Oh, oh.

ML: So, then I came home. I was eighteen, then. Eighteen or nineteen. This is before I met Bob. Oh, then my grandfather came back and he spoke to my dad—we were in the kitchen—that this boy has asked if they could pick me to be his wife. I said, you know, that's just like going to that old Japanese style.

NP: The arranged marriage.

ML: Yeah. But he was part German, Hawaiian. Nice-looking fellow, little older. And he didn't ask me, he asked my father. And I was right there, listening. Then my father said, well, that was up to me. But I didn't want. But I found out he was a nice fellow, this man. But I didn't know him. I ain't going with somebody that somebody. . . .

MM: Was Bob your first boyfriend, then?

ML: No, I had another boy, but he moved away and he died after. But not like the way we were going, see.

MM: Not serious.

ML: This boy came from someplace else. But then I told Bob, "Oh, this guy asked my grandfather for me to marry, to be his wife."

MM: So in the end, did you get married in June or you waited till September?

ML: No, we got married in June because Mrs. Ackerman, you know Mrs. Alice Ackerman? She was very close to the Leslie family. So we all got together. She says she was going to do this, another one was going to do that, help us to get together with the party. I didn't want big party because my father had no money to make a big party. So all these Japanese friends of Bob came. And each one said they going to give this, that. So finally we had enough to put up a little party. So just my own immediate family came for the wedding. And Bob's sisters in Honolulu, not one of them came.

MM: Not one?

ML: No. He had—there were twelve of them. Okay, the only ones was the ones at home I met. Those three sisters at home and one brother. We were the only ones. Nobody else came. But Bob's aunt, his father's sister, Mrs. Waggoner, she came, and her husband. And the few friends, Japanese friends, that Bob's parents had. And Mrs. Ackerman, Alice Ackerman, she gave out the flowers. And I guess that's it. A small wedding. But we had pictures taken, and I can't find the pictures.

MM: Oh, those of you . . .

ML: Yeah, married at the church.

MM: So nice you got married at the Painted Church.

ML: Yeah, but I didn't have a new dress. I had—you know when I was working at the hospital?—I had a sharkskin suit that time made by a Chinese store that my friend, the nurse, got for me. I wore that same dress—I mean, suit. It's a suit.

MM: Pretty, sharkskin. That would be . . .

ML: Yeah, yeah, at that time. And I had shoes, which were not new. And that's how we got married at the St. Benedict's Church.

MM: And then, bingo, you started having babies, right?

ML: Well, after I got married in June, August, I got pregnant. And I wanted to go out and work even if I have to work as a maid. After we got married, three days later, the [inter-island steamer] *Humuʻula* came to Nāpōʻopoʻo and hauled all the Greenwell's cattle.

They came on a Tuesday morning. And so, Bob and I got married Saturday—Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and then his mother said, "Well, we like to go Honolulu," spend a little time with the big sister. So I remember, his dad came. We got on a canoe with our little suitcase.

MM: Oh, you went with them, then.

ML: We went as far as to the boat, you know. From where the landing is, he took us to the boat. And we went on steerage, five dollars.

MM: Oh, my goodness!

ML: Five dollars. But on that hard brick thing. You know, that wood was just built that way, in-between space. But it was only five dollars.

MM: But with all the cattle, too.

ML: The cattle was behind. Yeah. And they had first class in the middle. Had a couple. But it was thirteen to fifteen dollars. So we thought, well, we got ride. We young. So we rode on that hard deck for five dollars. We left here Tuesday before noon. And we got there, Honolulu, the next morning, four o'clock. See, you have to go by steamer to get to Honolulu. Or you go to Kohala to catch a plane . . .

MM: ʻUpolu Point.

ML: That's right, ʻUpolu Point. We went by steamer here for five dollars. We didn't have much money.

MM: But you were in love. You were happy, Madeline.

ML: (Laughs) And I start thinking, oh, but many times I said, "Oh, I shouldn't have left the house." Because I had brothers [to take care of]. But they were old enough.

MM: Did your father ever tell, "Madeline, it's okay. Go get married?"

ML: Well, earlier than that, I told him once, "I don't want people looking for a husband for me." You know, I didn't want that. But the Japanese style was, they would match somebody. When they're ready to get married, they would match somebody's son and meet with them.

MM: You said during World War II, you lived at Keʻei Beach with your children?

ML: I lived there when I had my second-born.

MM: Your second-born.

ML: The first-born, we stayed with Bob's parents.

MM: In Nāpōʻopoʻo?

ML: In Nāpōʻopoʻo. When the second one came, was a boy, and I thought, "I want to live by ourselves." So we rented that old Saiki. . . . You remember that old shack down . . .

MM: That old shack . . .

ML: . . . at Keʻei, yeah.

MM: . . . down at Keʻei.

ML: We moved there. I went one day. We cleaned up the place. Oh, hard cleaning. Real cleaning up and scrub. You know, my mother-in-law came with me because my little baby was just about two months old. So she came to help me watch the baby while I do the cleaning.

MM: Was there an old store there called Saiki Store at Keʻei? Do you. . . .

ML: Saiki Store?

MM: Saiki Store.

ML: When I moved there, there was no store.

MM: No store at Keʻei?

ML: No.

MM: Okay.

ML: But Saiki had that building that we rented.

MM: That's the house you were in?

ML: Yeah, we were in. But then that was a lease from the Haile Estate. And he put up the house.

MM: Yeah, the two-story house?

ML: Yeah.

MM: It's a nice house.

ML: It's a nice house. Oh, I loved that house. The kids got lot of room to play and run around.

MM: That's good. And is that when you started learning how to weave *lau hala?*

ML: That's right. I came up once in a while and learned from my cousin. 'Cause she grew up learning from her grandmother and her mom. They all learned how to weave. But I didn't have my mother, so I wanted to learn. So I went to her and I started to learn how to weave.

MM: And you did that to get money, right?

ML: Mm-hmm [yes]. And buy food.

MM: So you were one of those ladies then. You're giving your father the hats and he's sending down food for you.

ML: And sometimes, Mr. Fukuda would buy some that I have if my dad had too much. You remember Mr. Fukuda? John Fukuda?

MM: No.

ML: He used to live at the old Japanese hospital?

MM: Oh, okay. He lived up that road then.

ML: Yeah. He comes making rounds every week to buy *lau hala* weaving from every family.

MM: Did he have a store, too? Was he selling it?

ML: No.

MM: What kind of things would you make?

ML: Well, I made *lau hala* hat, and those dinner mats. And then I learned to make dinner mats, you put 'em together and weave, and comes a half-moon purse. That time, that was popular.

MM: With the little zipper?

ML: Yeah. But I don't put the zipper. They just buy 'em like that as it is, and they take 'em home, and they do the zipping. Because that would cost more.

MM: That's right.

ML: Yeah. And then, finally, before we moved to Nāpōʻopoʻo in our new home, I started to build some mats big enough to put in each room.

MM: Oh, like floor mats?

ML: Floor mats. Yeah, they're about eight feet by four, I guess. I made several for each bedroom.

MM: Where did you get your *lau hala* from?

ML: Sometimes I would get from somebody here down at Keālia Beach because there were lot of *lau hala* trees growing [there].

MM: At Keālia Beach.

ML: Keālia Beach. And I used to pick *lau hala*s from there, bring 'em home. It's hard work when you have to take the thorns out. Then my dad's friend made me a roller, hand roller. You put the *lau hala* through and you. . . .

MM: It smoothes it, right? You roll it up?

ML: Yeah. But you have to take the thorns out first and cut the bad ends. And then I got someone to make the stripper. It's like a razor blade that you shave. They're very sharp. Too bad, I had one, but I gave it away.

MM: And the kids grew up right at that beach. When you had your babies, did you . . .

ML: Well, just before my time, I would come up and stay with my dad so that I have transportation to go to the hospital. I'm always having my babies at nighttime or early in the morning, so.

(Laughter)

ML: The first time I went they have to block all the car [head]light. I cannot go out with . . .

NP: Oh, because of blackout [conditions during World War II].

ML: . . . because of blackout. So you have to get the front lights covered so much just to get up there and have my babies. Everybody, not only me, during the wartime. You cannot go with the full light. I never knew how to drive. Somebody else took me. Either my brother or. . . .

NP: Did you make it to the hospital on time?

ML: Yeah, mm-hmm.

MM: Which doctor delivered your babies?

ML: Dr. Hayashi.

MM: Dr. Hayashi did.

ML: All my babies.

MM: Oh, that's good. Was it difficult living down on the beach?

ML: The only thing, we had no electricity and no telephone. But then just the years before I left, they built a camp past Keʻei . . .

MM: At Maluhia.

ML: Maluhia Camp. That's when they ran the electricity down there and the telephone. But we didn't take telephone. We had electricity, but it was just for a year or two years before I left. But I was able to buy a washing machine. The name was "Easy."

MM: Easy washing machine?

ML: So I got that.

MM: There's hardly any water down there.

ML: No, hardly. But only for little while. Then when I moved to Nāpōʻopoʻo, then it came handy. I took that machine over to do the washing. But my mother-in-law had this old-style where you run clothes through that roller? Oh, that thing is dangerous. But I was happy. Because I started having children. Another year, another one came; and then another one, I'm not even through with the other one coming. Then I had two babies using diapers.

MM: Oh, so hard.

ML: So that's when that rice bag material inside, the inside piece . . .

MM: The inside liner.

ML: Yeah. I made some diapers with that. I don't know how, but I learned to use that. The inside one is soft. And you wash out, and dry 'em out, and use 'em again.

NP: So when you were down at the beach, who was working with your father in the store?

ML: He worked himself, but then I had two brothers here, too.

NP: That was during World War II?

ML: Uh huh [yes].

NP: How did the war affect the store?

ML: Well, there were things that he could buy and some he could not. I guess certain items.

NP: For example. . . .

ML: But he didn't have much American food. It was most Japanese kind in a can. Lot of the things that they made was all canned.

MM: You mean, like bamboo shoots or mushrooms?

ML: Bamboo shoots, cucumber. But bamboo shoots, we have here growing. So we make our own. And they taste better.

MM: So he couldn't get a lot of the Japanese foods during the war?

ML: Well, when the salesmen came from Honolulu, he strictly [carried] Japanese food items all canned. So he had quite a bit of Japanese food in a can.

MM: But during the war, what happened with those?

ML: Well, war came. He couldn't buy much. The first thing they took from him was his radio.

MM: Your father's radio?

ML: Yeah, they took 'em away from him. He had a small radio. They took that. But he did have souvenirs that I remember I saw that he brought from Japan. And what happened, I didn't see it when the war started.

MM: Do you think they took them away from your father?

ML: No, I don't think so. I couldn't find any. Maybe they got rid some of them. They threw it away . . .

MM: They were scared, weren't they?

ML: I think so, yeah. So there were things. He had army jacket; he had, oh, lot of things. But after he died, there was nothing. I couldn't find anything. Even his picture, I couldn't find. When he and my mom got married, they had those color pictures that he sent

away. Well, the salesman came to pick it up and they make a big one. But then, nothing came back after that.

MM: Because like in your house—I know some Japanese houses, they always have the picture of the emperor and the empress on the wall.

ML: Yeah, we had. My dad had, too. All that was taken away.

NP: For the customers who wanted something like rice, how was that handled?

ML: Well, he would limit them, maybe five pounds, three pounds, until he can get new supply. I think all those stores were like that. And limits just so much gas. You couldn't get much things.

NP: Did people have ration cards?

ML: Yeah. It was all ration things.

NP: And how did that work in the store? Would he collect the cards?

ML: No, at that time my father didn't pick up those things because he was an alien. So there were a lot of things he couldn't get after that. Until everything was quiet down.

NP: So, in other words, because he was an alien, he was not allowed to sell the kind of goods that you would have or foods that you would have used ration cards for?

ML: No, when the salesmen come, they would notify the storekeepers. You can have this, you cannot have that. But the most needed items he always had for the people here.

NP: Like what were the needed items?

ML: Like the rice, crackers, sugar. Even canned goods was limited, too. 'Cause he can only buy so much.

MM: But still canned meat? He could still get corned beef maybe?

ML: Pork and beans, sardines. But the main that time was the codfish. But lot of people here was able to go down and get their own fish. They throw nets and they set nets. So those kind, like my dad would bring home lot of fish when he go down and hook them.

NP: Was it a hard time for your father and for the store?

ML: Yeah, I think many of them, during the wartime, because had Higashi, Morihara. . . . Of course, Morihara was taken away.

MM: Oh, Mr. Morihara was taken away? [Usaku Morihara, proprietor of Morihara Store of Hōnaunau, was interned as an enemy alien at Santa Fe, New Mexico, for the duration of World War II.]

ML: Yeah, him, and the [Japanese-language] school teacher that was here that helped Bob and I, our wedding time.

MM: Oh, the retired one?

ML: Yeah.

MM: The retired schoolteacher, they took him away?

ML: He was [taken] away, too. Like Mr. [Kanesaburo] Oshima, Mr. [Usaku] Morihara. I know they picked up my dad, took him up to Manago [Hotel], and questioned him. But then after all that, they didn't take [i.e., intern] him.

MM: Thank goodness.

ML: And he had his little bag with all his clothes.

MM: He was ready to go.

ML: He was ready. And so he waited, and again they called him. Mr. Nakagawa was the interpreter. You remember Mr. Nakagawa? Lived down by that turnoff. Had that little house on the side.

MM: Oh, going down to Nāpōʻopoʻo?

ML: Yeah, that turnoff.

MM: He had a store, too, didn't he?

ML: Right, right. He's an old-timer there. So he interpreted when my father was taken up to Manago [Hotel] and they came to check on him.

MM: Did your father tell you kids, "I think they're going to take me away"?

ML: No, he didn't tell me till later. Because he had his things all ready.

MM: Oh, that must have been so scary.

ML: Somebody said, well, maybe because he married a Hawaiian wife [as an explanation for not being interned]. I said, I don't know. But they questioned him whether he went out to the ship [i.e., greeted Japanese naval personnel while docked in Kona]. But many,

many times he wasn't able to go. They would go to the Japan ship when it came in. But my dad hardly had time to go out.

MM: This is interesting, Madeline. The Japanese ship would come into Nāpōʻopoʻo Bay, wouldn't it?

ML: Right, right. Because I went once, Bob took me.

MM: Oh, so you and Bob went to see the Japanese ship?

ML: Just to go on [board]. We walk little ways because people all had time to go. And I'm sure there was a Japanese ship that I went on with Bob.

MM: And you actually went on the deck of the Japanese ship?

ML: I think so. He took me up and we had his little kid brother that I took with us. I'm pretty sure there was a Japanese ship.

MM: But you remember those Japanese ships coming in?

ML: Yeah. Because Bob took me down one time. So I think that was a Japanese ship. But my father hardly took part in it because, see, my mother passed away and he was alone to take care the business and took care of us kids. So he didn't have much time. So they questioned him on many things. But lot of things, he didn't take part. He had no time to go.

MM: That's right, he really had no time.

ML: But he was expected to go [i.e., be interned]. That's why he prepared. And just about that time he made a remark to me that maybe he might have to go. But nothing happened.

MM: Well, lucky he didn't go. And so, but the poor retired Japanese[-language] school teacher had to [be interned]? They took him away?

ML: Mm-hmm, they took him away.

MM: And Mr. Morihara.

ML: Mr. Morihara, Mr. Oshima, and lot of others that. . . .

MM: The Japanese[-language] school teachers, the Hongwanji ministers.

ML: Ministers, right. Many of them went. But my father stayed back. But he was without radio.

MM: And where were you when the Pearl Harbor happened?

ML: I was down. . . . You see, Bob had an accident one night. He was young. He still liked to go out. So Lily was just a baby. I looked, he didn't come home. He took his dad's truck. On the dad's truck had this bell you ring when you go out peddling so the customers would know fish car is coming. You remember Ethel Paris?

MM: Yes.

ML: She used to come to my place all the time to buy fish. She never forgets, she said, when Bob, one night after midnight, coming down that road, him and a Japanese boy, a friend, and ringing the bell.

(Laughter)

ML: And Ethel tells me all that. Then she found out next day it was Bob. He hit a bank and he went over.

MM: Oh, and the bell was ringing as he . . .

ML: Well, he rang the bell first. Playing with the bell at midnight like that.

MM: Oh, I see. Fooling around.

ML: And then Ethel told me, all they heard was a big noise. He hit and he fell.

MM: The whole car *huli*ed *makai?*

ML: Yeah, it was a truck. And I had my little baby, you know, my daughter. She was just about seven months old. And I waited. He didn't come home. Then when they did bring him home, they carried him home. And he couldn't walk. So the next day, he had his mom, his dad's sister and the husband, took him. He had a broken leg. And the mom folks were in Honolulu. They were not here. They went away for little while to visit the other children. I was able to go visit him. They put him in the back room, a long room. His feet was way up. They had a bar . . .

MM: Oh, the traction.

ML: I think so. And then, tie his feet to that.

MM: To the bar?

ML: And then had a heavy sand [bag] or something.

MM: The weight.

ML: To hold his foot up like that. Oh, it was awful.

MM: Now, this is October 6 or December 6?

ML: October 6. And he came home December 6, and the war started December 7. I could never forget that.

MM: Two months he stayed in the hospital.

ML: Two months. And when he came home December 6, the next morning—we were occupying the back bedroom of the big house. We slept on the floor with a mattress. Because of the baby, I don't want to sleep on the bed. And he got up. He had crutches to walk because not too strong. And it came on the radio, the attack, December 7 morning.

MM: Were people in Nāpōʻopoʻo scared 'cause you were on the ocean?

ML: Yeah, lot of them, but the police came in and notified some, I think. Like Charlie Machado them came around and warned us about the attack. But Bob just—he couldn't do anything. He was just walking with crutches. But his mom and dad were young, yet. So two months he stayed in the hospital.

MM: Did the truck get all smashed up?

ML: It was no good.

MM: No good?

ML: No.

END OF SIDE TWO

TAPE NO. 35-4-2-00; SIDE ONE

MM: We have to go back. Yeah, okay. Just wait. Back up, Madeline. We were just talking about how your father. . . . What time did the store open in the morning?

ML: Oh, yeah. Well, let's see. Either six, six-thirty. When it's daylight, people come. Most time, about six-thirty, seven o'clock. Let's say, seven, maybe.

MM: Seven o'clock. And they'd knock on the door of the store?

ML: Sometimes, yeah. When the store is not open and they need things badly, they would knock on the door. And then, like they say, "Oh, I didn't have sugar," or something like that. They always forget. So that's when he opens the door a little, off hours.

MM: Off hours. Would he ever send you kids out, "Oh, go pump gasoline"?

ML: Yeah, we did all that. Because sometimes my father would let me stay in the store, take care the customers while he do some other errands.

MM: So you could do that?

ML: Oh, yeah. I used to fill up the gas in the car with that old pump.

MM: And you could fill up the kerosene for the lanterns?

ML: Yeah, those are simple things.

MM: That's right. And the money, did your father have a cash register in the store?

ML: Yeah, he had an old Japanese cash register. And the bell would ring. Cute little thing.

MM: It's a cute little thing. You pull out the drawer.

ML: You just. . . . And then there's all the space, round, all round with the coins. And then, the back has for the bills, dollar bills, whatever. Paper money.

MM: Did your father have an abacus in the store to count with?

ML: He had those. . . . Yeah, those things.

NP: *Soroban.*

ML: Yeah. He had. That's what he used. I don't know how to use that.

(Telephone rings. Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

ML: Where were we now?

MM: We were talking about how you kids helped your dad in the store, like when the customers came early. And how he added with the abacus.

ML: Yeah. He had. In fact, it got so old. . . . I don't know how to use those things. But he had an old adding machine, after that. He bought an adding machine, the Dalton.

MM: And you knew how to use that?

ML: Yeah. The adding machine. But he would use his own, the Japanese one.

NP: *Soroban.*

MM: Did you have to write out receipts?

ML: Yeah, the statement that he had made. All the statement was made by Stationers Corporation in Hilo. And he buys several books.

MM: Was it printed with "Fujihara Store?"

ML: Yeah. Everything was printed.

MM: Okay. So would he have a carbon copy and he would write each . . .

ML: The receipt, especially, yeah.

NP: So someone would take the receipt and the carbon would stay?

ML: Well, some, he does not do that. Some, he does. But for payment, he have to do that. You know, when they pay their bills.

NP: Would he itemize each like, say, "canned salmon"?

ML: Oh, yeah, he does. He has to, because otherwise, it's hard. They might forget what they bought, see.

MM: That's right. There was no other way to do it, except handwriting. You said your father did all his receipts in Japanese.

ML: Japanese. He didn't knew how to write English.

MM: But he was a successful storekeeper, right?

ML: You know, he did those things and all many things he did, I picked up from him.

NP: When you had customers who couldn't speak or read Japanese, who would write the receipts?

ML: Oh, I would write in English. And the Japanese people, their children went to school, English, they learn, yeah.

MM: That's right, so if you wrote it in English, it was okay.

ML: Yeah, mm-hmm. Itemize items, you know, on the statement books.

MM: So what happened like if the store was still open till seven o'clock on some nights. Did you eat supper after or you. . . .

ML: Oh, we took turns. Sometimes the cooking would be done early, and then one person would be in the store or two while we were eating. Because there were six of us, now. Six kids.

MM: Yeah, six kids.

ML: So my father would let some eat first, but there's always someone in the front [i.e., watching the store].

MM: I just wondered, did you ever have a burglar? Did someone ever break into the store?

ML: I think once, because I remember, the police came and it was someone from way past the lava flow, this boy. Well, he was only a young boy. And he went in the store to pick up something. And then my father found out after. But they don't jail them. They just. . . . I guess the parents sometimes could settle things, yeah? That's the only time. When I moved here, yeah, I had lot of people stealing.

MM: So Keālia had changed by the time you moved here in the '60s.

ML: Yeah, different people.

NP: And how would you handle it when. . . .

ML: I just make a report, like what I lost. That's when I didn't have this house, yet. I have to come every morning to open. So one morning I came, I found the jalousies' glass were open. And then I realized that you can easily take them off, and put your hands inside and unlock. And that's how this person got in the house. And then I looked around and I called the police station. And I found out what I lost, and all itemized, and took 'em to my accountant. Another time they took beer, whatever.

Oh, now I remember. At my father's old store, once, while he was living, they went to that liquor store. I don't know how they got it open. Then the neighbor across saw what was going on. They called right away and we came up. The police was here; Bob and I came up. And my father was not in the store. He went down and he spent the night at my sister's house, not far. So then we came. Beer cases were gone. Some whiskey bottles from the shelf. Lot of things were gone, the cash box, cigarette cartons. Because it was entered in the box.

MM: Oh, you knew from your inventory what was missing?

ML: No, we saw. It was gone. See, my dad always buy maybe twenty cartons of the different cigarettes. And then when he opened it, was empty. Because he knows how much he bought. And the little cash box, you know, those little metal box? That was taken, too. It was quite some time, then the police called and said they found the two men that did that. And they found my dad's cash box in the bushes when they went to clean. And they called me. I had the fish market, then. And the police came, said they found the coin box. You know, where you put all your coins.

MM: Was there anything in it?

ML: Empty. Then another man, going Pu'uanahulu side, they found some beer. And they found my father's radio. The radio, not the one that he had before. It's a small radio. And one of them came from Kohala or Hāmākua side. But they got the two men. They took several cases of beer. And I think when they drove up the hill, it was too heavy. It was an old car. It was too heavy for them to drive up, so they unloaded some.

MM: Well, that, thankfully that didn't happen too often, though, did it?

ML: No, just that one time. But they really took lot of things because my dad had this Toshiba rice cooker in the store to sell. Those Toshiba rice cookers. He just had one there to sell. And in the showcase—you know, the stores had showcases, display cases.

(Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

NP: So your father had display cases in his store, kind of glass.

ML: You remember those days, there was all display cases, glass, in the old stores. Yeah, we had all those in the stores. The shelves were just for the canned goods.

MM: Along the walls.

ML: Yeah, but the other things were all in the glass case. We had three.

MM: Three display cases?

ML: Yeah. In there were like cards or small items. But you cannot leave them out because it's easy . . .

MM: Like the fishing hooks maybe? The fishing hooks . . .

ML: Fishing hooks had another showcase. And down below, he had a little cabinet with those windows like that, square. You could see what you want to buy from there. My father had some things in there. He had pretty good supplies. And you kids all knew if somebody came in and wanted fishing hooks or something, where to go find them. But

they would always call my dad to come out in there. They were more to watch if we have customers, they come in, like that. Although my kids were just—'*āhiu* means they get scared of people. Because where they stayed, Ke'ei, they don't see much people. So they always stayed in the back. Always in the back.

MM: What were the best years for your store? The time when you were most prosperous, when you did the best?

ML: It was after I moved here.

MM: Oh, in the [19]60s when you moved?

ML: Right, right. I picked up lot of the things. I came to sell lot of things like the really needed items. Like any car, I had oil to sell in quarts, I had two-gallon white gas or natural gas. And I had animal feed in the back for dogs, cow—I had all different kinds. I would buy them from the Albers Milling Company.

MM: Even like cattle and horse feed?

ML: Yeah.

MM: Chicken feed?

ML: Chicken feed. And they're all in the big sack. Yeah, I bought all those. And the dog food, and I sell cat food. I bought more things because I had a bigger store. So I added lot of things.

MM: And the local people, your customers really . . .

ML: Yeah, well, I had lots from Honomalino. I had lot of customers from there. All kinds of customers. And they would ask me if I could give them [credit] every two weeks, payday. Then they would come and pay me.

MM: These are the mac[adamia] nut workers.

ML: The workers. And the ranch, that I had. And some from Miloli'i, some people. Or up on the highway.

MM: And so you did give them two weeks' charging?

ML: Yeah. And because I had a bigger store, I added more things than what I had in the old store, see. And I sold lot of gift items. I picked up lot of the things that I felt that some people like to buy. Gift items for weddings or birthdays. And I bought some, like dish sets and small pot sets. I got lot of things that I didn't have at the old store.

NP: And those sold well?

ML: Yeah, they did pretty good.

MM: So you changed your father's store. Now it was your store, right?

ML: Yeah, it was mine, so I bought lot of things that I could sell. And I got more refrigeration in there, although I bought some second-hand refrigerators. Then when I was able to, I bought an old cash register. Then I got a new one after that. Things got better, yeah?

MM: That's right. And so, I was thinking, you got the refrigeration, then you could start selling milk, right?

ML: Everything. Milk, all kinds that I could sell here. I had two big ones. You know, double door?

MM: Yeah.

ML: Yeah, and I had a display case, big one. I bought, slowly; I bought one, one, one. I didn't buy all one time.

MM: Did you leave your father's old display cases behind? Did they . . .

ML: No, I brought some here. The good ones. So I had lot of things in there. People don't pick, you know. Sometimes I could be so busy and I don't know who picking up things until I look for 'em, it's gone. So many things was all in glass case or wooden case. But the others were on shelves. They can just pick up. I used to sell shoes, too, workingmen's shoes and slippers. And baby clothes. And pillow slips for wedding gifts. I sold some of that. I sold blankets, also. I added lot of things. And that way, I made more money, you know.

NP: More variety. Did you have lots of different suppliers then that you would go to? Because you had so many different kinds of merchandise, did you have to have a lot of different people supplying you?

ML: Yeah. Different salesmen have different items. And I would deal with Hoffschlaeger Company for some German knives or twines, like that. With all the wholesalers in Hilo, practically, whatever I needed. And they started to come.

MM: I was just wondering, this is now in the [19]60s, so it's your store and Higashi Store and Morihara Store are still all continuing, right?

ML: Right, right. Yeah.

MM: Is one of you bigger or. . . .

ML: Well, what I had that they didn't have was the liquor store. I sold beer and wine, hard liquor.

MM: And they never did, those other two?

ML: No, they never did. So that's the part that I had. But the license was big [i.e., expensive] and you are limited for certain items. But I made sure that I buy what I can pay for so I don't get too much at one time, each time. So then when I have my books, end of the day or end of the month, then I would see how much I made. I mean, it's a tricky thing to run a business. And you have to know the customers and how to act with them. I mean, I have experience with some of them. They would buy and then they ran away to another place. And I can't find them. And that's a loss. But I still did well. Like when I had the store, I would not hire because I want to work myself and I can take care the payments. But if I need someone to come, I hire someone to come and I pay them so much.

MM: Kind of a part-time employee?

ML: Yeah, yeah. But most of the time I'm there from four o'clock in the morning. I get up, go down there, and put all canned goods on the shelves.

MM: Uh huh, oh, restock.

ML: Yeah, stock those things. And put down what I need to order for the next salesman that comes. I would have to clean the glasses, the windows, scrub floors, whatever. I do all that before eight o'clock. The store open exactly at eight o'clock.

MM: Eight o'clock. You didn't let anybody pound on the door, yeah? (Laughs)

ML: Well, sometimes they do. And if just one item, I say, okay, okay, then, go.

MM: Oh, you'd still let them come in. What time did you close the new store?

ML: Six o'clock. Because somebody told me, at that time, people were traveling. And if they see a store open late and I'm alone, it's kind of risky, dangerous. They warned me. So six o'clock was always [closing time]. Sunday, I used to work all day. Then finally, when I made enough, I closed the store half a day. So I had half a day for myself.

NP: What half would you close?

ML: Well, I go to church first in the morning. And they know the sign says "Sunday, 9 to 12."But sometimes people would call me, "Oh, I can't get there on time."

I say, "You know what? I'll get your things ready. You come from the back and you pick up your things and go." So I did that for them. Not to everybody, but. 'Cause sometimes they're an hour late or forty-five minutes or whatever time. And I'm in the back in the kitchen, yet.

MM: It has a kitchen, your store?

ML: Yeah, I had. I added a kitchen and I had a room, thinking I would put my father there. But he died before I finished. So I had a kitchen. Then, after years, I extended the back, the big room in the back. And I had my laundry machine, my washing machine. And then, after few years, I noticed all the families had no refrigerator, no ice. So that was extra money I made, very good. All the empty plastic gallon [cartons], like Clorox or juice gallon, I would cut them at the top, and I bought two freezers.

MM: So you made ice.

ML: And I made ice. And I have ice on the floor, then I put a shelf, another ice. And I sold. Every time I go down, four o'clock or three-thirty to take all the ice out. And I bagged, and I sell them, fifty cents a bag, ice. It's the size of the gallon Clorox or gallon juice.

MM: It's a big solid chunk of ice? The size of . . .

ML: Yeah.

MM: Yeah, that's good.

NP: Maybe they use that for coolers.

ML: And I have a big—you know, those buckets? Plastic buckets? The bigger ones that has two gallons? I put some of that, also. They want bigger bag ice, I sell them that.

MM: Oh, Madeline, that's a good idea.

ML: Yeah. And I sold lot of ice. And that was extra money for me.

MM: That's right.

NP: That's so smart. And then you'd recycle the containers again, I bet.

ML: I keep them. Or sometimes, some of my customers would say, "Oh, you want empty gallons? I throw 'em away."

I say, "Well, bring 'em then."

So they bring 'em to me. I cut 'em up neatly, and wash 'em clean, and I fill up. It takes time to fill up all. I made sixty gallons at one time.

MM: Oh, wow.

ML: But remember, I sold them at fifty cents a bag. That's something. And the bucket, I would sell, $2.50. Because people didn't have a place to go get ice. So I was the only one selling ice here. Unless they go up further, they would buy a big block. But part-time people go out picnic, or go fishing just for small fish, they need ice. So they buy one, two bags. Some would buy three, four bags. Then I always, if I empty the freezer, then I have the next one ready for the next day. In between. They don't get hard in one day. It takes two days to get sixty of them. And I have another one. I keep making ice. And then when I buy too much things from the wholesaler, like Suisan Company, a box of chicken, then I would store them in the freezer. So I always had two freezers going.

MM: Madeline, I just remembered. Did you bring the gas station with you when you built the new store?

ML: I tried to, but I couldn't. Because the fire station came. I would have to pay a big insurance because, you see, I only had twenty-five feet from my boundary. Wait. So many feet from my boundary to the road, I'm not allowed to put gas. So that's why I didn't sell gas.

MM: And your old gas tanks, where did they go?

ML: They dug up the tank. One, my gas pump, I think, went to City of Refuge.

MM: It went to the City of Refuge?

ML: I think so. One went there. And the tank, where did it go? 'Cause it was good yet, the tank.

MM: Oh, it was?

ML: They have to rip up all the whole thing before they can get that tank out.

MM: Oh, my gosh.

ML: But these days, we don't sell gas. I mean, everyplace they have gas, right, all electric. And mine, well, I had that old-style one. Then finally, I got the electric one that don't register any, the charges, just go by the gallon. And I have to figure out, okay, half a gallon, so much.

MM: That's right. The new ones are easy, aren't they?

ML: The new ones, oh, yes. They just register everything for you. But this was because when the power goes off, people like to come down because I have that old-style. But after that, I bought the other one. Then that went down. I saved it to bring 'em here.

MM: But you couldn't.

ML: I couldn't. Because they don't allow that. So I got rid of the gas. So I sold gas by the gallon. You know, those . . .

MM: Camping gas.

ML: Yeah, those gallon size?

MM: Yes.

ML: I sold that kind of gas.

MM: For Coleman stoves.

ML: Yeah, for the Coleman stove. But automobile gas, no, I don't. I couldn't.

MM: So Morihara has the gasoline . . .

ML: Higashi.

MM: Oh, excuse me. That's right. Higashi has it. That's right.

ML: So he made good.

MM: So you had to do the ice.

ML: Yeah.

MM: So you changed. Did you ever sell stuff like *sushi* or sandwiches?

ML: Yes, somebody used to bring here all the time to sell. What I made from my kitchen was, I used to make salad and sandwiches. And it was going—I cannot keep up. So I say, heck, I'm not going to make anymore. I couldn't keep up because every Sunday, the people, they come, they buy. I make salad and sell them by the dish. And first thing you know, I couldn't keep up. I gave up. I mean, I have to keep making more each time. And not enough time for me because I have to open the store by certain time. See, eight o'clock is my time to open. And six o'clock is closing time. Then Sundays, after I did pretty well, I decided to take off half a day, Sunday. So I closed half a day. After we build this house, then [my husband] comes home [from fishing] and help me sometimes load the beer in the cooler. I had lot of things run by electric. It takes quite a bit, yeah.

MM: Yeah, your electric bill must be kind of large, making all that ice and everything.

ML: Yeah. 'Cause I sold meat, too.

MM: Oh, you did?

ML: Yeah, I sold meat all the time. I buy my meat from Hilo.

NP: Hilo Meat Company.

ML: Yeah, sausages, hamburger, all those things I've been selling. So I had double door for all that. And my milk and juices came from Meadow Gold.

MM: Meadow Gold. Okay, the delivery truck.

ML: So I had two big cases with a glass door. And you can buy your cheese and cold cuts. I sold all that. Eggs.

MM: Who was the egg person?

ML: Came from Hilo Products. They deliver here for me. And I buy their vegetables from them, also. Every Thursday, they come in. So I wait for them to come and bring all my vegetables. And I sold all the needed things like string beans, carrots, celery. All those things, I sold.

MM: And the bakery? Breads?

ML: Came from the two bakeries. Standard and Kona Bakery.

MM: You were a big—I mean, not like today. Today, it's different, isn't it?

ML: Yeah. She's [i.e., the new owner] not selling the things that I used to sell. I used to sell all kinds, whatever I think people will buy.

MM: So you decided to retire from that store when you were seventy? Did you decide that, Madeline?

ML: Well, I closed in January of the year I made seventy. January, February, March I made seventy. That's the year I closed the store and sold the business.

MM: That's like [19]89, or something.

ML: Eighty-nine, right.

MM: 'Cause you're born in 1919 and you were seventy, so it was 1989. You decided to let the Fujihara Store be leased by somebody else.

ML: Yeah. They didn't want to take the name off. Because, I think, if they changed the name, they have to pay a little extra for the business name change. So Buskay told me, oh, he going to leave the name on. Then when she bought from Buskay, again, she said no, she's not going to change the name. So the name is still there.

MM: Still Fujihara Store.

ML: Yeah. I own the building, so I charge them rent. Because my equipments were there and the building was there. And the agreement was, with the first, the other owner, that every five years we change, renew our lease agreement.

MM: Okay, well, I think I'll ask you to talk about your career as a storekeeper.

ML: Career?

MM: That's what you've been. Do you think of yourself as a storekeeper? Or you think of yourself as a mother or a wife, I wonder?

ML: Well, I tell you, I was a mother with my children until they were four years old, the first to the last one. I start going out to work. Like open up the fish market. And coming down here to work weekends or whenever there's no fish, when the boat go dry dock.

Then I come and help my dad and sell things for him. Make out the books. And when I took over the business I told him, "You've been paying the salesmen all cash because you don't know how to write checks. But now, I'm going to open up a checking account with the bank." At that time, Mr. Cushingham was there. And my dad and Mr. Cushingham are old-time friends. So I opened the bank account up there and had the business all checks, not like my father pay cash. And sometimes he don't remember. And it was risky because if he don't keep the receipts or if he don't get the receipts, he could be charged second time for the purchase.

MM: Yeah. That's right.

ML: So since he turned the store to me, I went strictly with First Hawaiian [Bank] and made it all, everything was purchased with checks. All the bills I paid with checks. But it was my name, doing business as K. Fujihara Store. "Madeline Leslie, d.b.a. K. Fujihara Store." That's the way I did.

MM: And you took the business over from your father about nineteen. . . . Before he died.

ML: Before he died. Well, oh, 1957.

MM: Nineteen fifty-seven.

ML: He turned the business over to me.

MM: You've really worked so hard. I mean, do you see yourself as a very hardworking . . .

ML: Yeah, I really worked hard. I always tell my children, you know, it was not easy for me to grow up and having brothers and sisters below me. And my two young brothers always thought I was their mother until they got old because they didn't know my mom. The ones below, only one sister. And my two young brothers and sister, they didn't know my mother. Because the youngest was about two years old when my mom died. And my other brother got sick and was always away at the hospital. So always, my father comes first because he took care of us. He never neglected us. Although he had very little to feed us, and we didn't have the rich food like we should have. But at least we grew up, we had clothes, a place to stay. We ate whatever he planted.

MM: He was a hardworking man, all that fishing and growing things.

ML: Yeah, well, the fishing, that's his hobby. He likes to go down Fishbowl and come back, walking down and walking up that hill. We learned to eat fish through my dad. When Bob used to bring some fish that he used to catch, my dad was so happy to see some fresh *ʻūʻū*, something like that. But you know, when the wartime came, Bob had no canoe. He couldn't fish. So he got my dad's old canoe and he and I went out fishing down Keālia Beach. He kept Lily, when she was a baby, just for so many hours. And I would go out and catch enough *ʻōpelu*s and we come back. We did that once in a while.

MM: Your father would take care of Lily?

ML: Yeah. For just a few hours. Maybe two or three hours. 'Cause she would be sleeping, too. So when we moved to Keʻei, Bob and I used to go out on a canoe, go out fishing. That time, I had all these five kids.

MM: That's great.

ML: But you know . . .

NP: You had some good times, too.

ML: Yeah, I did. I did, yeah. Sometimes was miserable, but.

MM: But you're happy you're a Kona girl now?

ML: Oh, yeah. I'm happy because I have my children. There were times when I felt disgusted, that I felt, well, is this what I'm going to live in my marriage life? I mean, that's how I felt. But having my children, they mean a lot to me. Every one that came, I'm sure that I have to take good care of my children. And you know, I didn't drive. We had no transportation. And I learned how to take care of them when they had colds. I rub Vicks. I see how my old folks did. Rub hard Vicks and put a flannel on. Take care them, you know? Then they get well. Except one that got asthma. I couldn't—he was real asthma boy.

MM: But you were like their doctor when they got the fevers?

ML: Yeah, but then, you know, my grandfather. I told you about it last time, about the *kukui* nut. Didn't I tell you about that?

MM: No, no. This is your grandfather's remedy for things?

ML: Yeah. Milton was five months old and he had a bad asthma. And all that, what you call that?

MM: Phlegm?

ML: Phlegm was stuck up there. So he [grandfather] came down and he told me, "Go and pick the *kukui* nut, the green ones. The fresh green ones. Come home. Be sure the stem is on. He told me, before the sunrise, I think, yeah, break three *kukui* nuts. The juice of each *kukui* nut, put it in the spoon. One drop, the next one. And he said, just put it in the baby's mouth and let him swallow that." So I did that. It brought that phlegm out and cleaned the inside. And my mother-in-law, who had twelve children, never ever seen or heard about that. When she saw me doing that to Milton, she couldn't believe. All the years, she said, she never knew that it's like a medicine for asthma children.

MM: And it worked.

ML: It worked. Because he was five months old and he was asthmatic. And out Ke'ei Beach, what can I do? I rub, rub Vicks all the time. But when my grandfather came, he told me what to do. So I made Bob go to the little Ke'ei Road, there's lot of *kukui* nut trees. Pick up so many *kukui*, fresh *kukui*. And I keep 'em in a shady spot. And morning and evening, I have to make sure I break them and hold the spoon there so the juice would go into the spoon.

MM: Just one drop out of each *kukui* nut.

ML: Yeah, and feed 'em. Then when Lily was about a year old, she had all cold sores in her mouth. You ever seen babies have that? Around here, and. . . .

NP: It's awful. It hurts them so much.

ML: So he made me get the juice and just rub it in and put it in her mouth. He said, rub all that in there.

MM: The *kukui* nut juice?

ML: The *kukui* nut juice. And those two things I learned to use on my children. But only Milton needed the *kukui* nut because he was asthma. But to clean the baby's mouth when they have cold sore, always use that. And it helped.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MM: Well, Madeline, Nancy and I are going to drive back to Waimea now but . . .

ML: Oh, I see.

MM: . . . but we want to thank you.

ML: Oh, you're welcome.

MM: Thank you for talking to us about your whole life.

ML: Well, it's good thing that I remember some of it.

MM: You remember a lot. And it's fascinating.

ML: But many things, too, I cannot.

MM: Thank you so much, Madeline.

ML: You're welcome.

MM: It's a wonderful experience.

ML: Happy to.

NP: And you are going to keep remembering it. You have a great memory. It's not going away.

ML: You know, I have a book, special book that was given to me when I made my fiftieth anniversary. It's to keep the family record. I try to start and then I say, oh, heck, I'm going do something else.

END OF INTERVIEW

Kona Heritage Stores Oral History Project

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August 2006